

Rye, New Hampshire



Master Plan

2006

Adopted on: May 8, 2007

Amended on: _____



RYE PLANNING BOARD

10 Central Road, Rye New Hampshire 03870 603-964-9800

Certification of Adoption of Master Plan

The Rye Planning Board hereby certifies that the 2006 Rye, N.H. Master Plan was duly adopted on by vote of the planning board at its May 8, 2007, regular meeting.

Donald Cavallaro, Chairman

Mark Galvin, Vice-Chair

Priscilla Jenness, Selectmen's Rep

Jaci Grote, Clerk

Melvin R. Low

Samuel Winebaum

William Zechel

Robert W. Gray, III, Alternate

Priscilla Patrick, Alternate

Robert T. Brown, Alternate

Martin Zivic, Alternate

Town of Rye, N.H.

Master Plan

May 8, 2007

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Robert T. Brown, Alternate

Martin Zivic, Alternate

Michael Donovan, Esquire Consultant

Kimberly M. Reed, Planning & Zoning Administrator

LONG RANGE PLANNING COMMITTEE

As the chairperson of the long range planning committee, I know that the entire town of Rye owes a debt to the Master Plan steering committee members (Bob Brown; Tom Argue; Susan Rizkalla; Victor Azzi; Mel Low and Priscilla Jenness) for their dedication to this plan and for staying part of the team. It has been an ongoing process for more than three (3) years, with much time invested by many people. I would also like to thank the planning board members, various boards, commissions, volunteers and Rye citizens who contributed their time, energy, thoughts and resources to this updated master plan. The information gained from the Visioning Forums was invaluable, heard widely incorporated.

We were aided by the Rockingham Planning Commission for their researching and writing four (4) chapter of this plan: Housing; Land Use; Natural Resources and Transportation. The original documents have been edited and formatted to fit this plan but are available at the Planning and Zoning office for reference. The LRP committee implemented the style of: vision, background and next steps. As you read this, you may notice your own ideas. We appreciate your input.

During the three (3) plus years that it has taken to work on the updated master plan; Rye has Senior SERVE, a Retirement Community Development zoning ordinance, a vision for a town center and much more. There is a more extensive list in the Concordance later in this document. The Master Plan is a start, opening and tool to the future of Rye. We hope that you will find the style of the revised Master Plan friendly and more readable than earlier editions. Remember it is a living document and will be revised as we get ideas from you, our fellow residents.

Sincerely,

Kimberly M. Reed
Planning & Zoning Administrator

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AN INVITATION TO COMMUNITY PLANNING IN RYE

In 1935 the State of New Hampshire authorized local governing bodies to undertake planning for their jurisdictions. The legislature charged communities to prepare master plans. Planning boards were to elicit community comments to formulate guidelines for municipal growth.

This document, the Town of Rye's 2006 Master Plan, is an update of Rye's 1998 Master Plan, and fulfills part of the State's requirements. It is the product of multiple sources of input as to what we as a community choose for our self-governing future. It synthesizes our wishes as expressed through:

- The 2002 Rye Opinion Survey;
- Community interest groups that met to evaluate planning options;
- Three public visioning sessions held in 2004 and 2005;
- Multiple meetings of the Planning Board's Long Range Planning Committee;
- Research and expertise provided by members of the Rockingham Planning Commission;
- Interviews with Rye elected officials; and
- Review of warrant article election results since the last master plan was enacted.

Under law this Plan will guide our seven-member Planning Board and our five-member Board of Adjustment (the BOA) in their deliberations to decide what development proposals will be approved as consistent with the visions we have for our community. It has also been specifically crafted to provide a broader vision to guide the many other civic organizations and decisions in town working toward our unified goals.

The adoption of this document by the Planning Board after public hearings will guide and govern decisions made by the Planning Board and the Board of Adjustment (the BOA). As such it is important that we, as citizens, understand the ongoing planning mechanism that shapes our visible community.

Rye has several land use boards: the Planning Board, the Long Range Planning Committee, the Zoning Board of Adjustment, the Conservation Commission, the Historic District Commission, and the Open Space Committee. All Boards comprise of volunteers, they represent our neighbors and community members who have a cross-section of jobs and contribute their "spare time" to define the laws and to help shape our town of tomorrow.

In addition to state and federal laws (such as environmental regulations), Planning Board Members follow the Rye Zoning Ordinances. These are our laws passed by the Town according to local priorities. These ordinances outline what is allowed in terms of types of buildings and uses in various zoning districts.

The Rye Land Development Regulations outline the town-specific processes that potential builders follow to modify portions of our community through construction.

With guidance from our Zoning and Planning Administrator, Town Counsel, and volunteer Town committees; Planning and Zoning Board members discuss lot sizes, building heights and densities, street widths, septic systems, open space, agricultural uses, “special exceptions,” etc. in making decisions about what construction to allow. The decisions are legally binding upon the Town and the developer, entrepreneur or homeowner with whom they are working.

It is an important job for a small group of volunteers. Their decisions help shape the town that we call Home. There are many details in plans and specifications that together change the face of Rye.

The intent of this document is to invite the reader into the process of Community Planning. Civic engagement, a right and a responsibility for each of us, is largely the product of volunteer on-the-job training. Few of us know the ropes before we start. Interest and willingness are the vital ingredients.

There is no singular “they” that is shaping our town. This document reflects input for Rye’s vision through participation in Rye’s planning process from diverse venues.

We thank those who wrote, spoke and participated in the development of this plan, whether once or through ongoing memberships in town groups. Committees, Commissions and Boards in town could use additional help in our ongoing process of becoming the Rye we envision.

This is work that requires wisdom and heart in addition to facts and laws. We would like to welcome YOU to planning Rye’s future.

CHAPTER 1 – OUR VISION FOR RYE

Our vision for Rye is characterized by respect for our neighbors, the common good, and the natural environment. Our land use policies will be fair, supporting balances of choice, convenience, safety, security, conservation, and a sense of community. Our reward will be a strong town in a beautiful place, comprised of an active, empowered citizenry working for the well-being of the community.

Our desires to see Rye altered are few. It is our intent to make changes deliberately to adapt to the dynamic needs of our citizens and respect the rights of others with interests in our community.

Our vision for Rye Town Center recognizes it as the foundation upon which the town has grown. We will protect, preserve, and reinforce its character and integrity. There will be a palpable sense of community for residents as well as visitors. Many of the components of that vibrant town center are in place: Town Hall, library, safety building, school, a traditional New England church, veterans' memorial, cemetery, and historic district. We will promote additional opportunities to foster regular and multiple social interactions for all members of the community; to include but not limited to: pedestrian paths, bikeways, and traffic-calming and – mitigating features along Town Center streets. We envision pocket parks and gardens for all to enjoy and a few apartments built over small retail establishments. The additions of a bandstand, cafe and general store in our Town Center will increase our opportunities to foster a sense of community. This will be unified by human-scale density and architectural style honoring the historic buildings and character of much that already exists.

Our intent to foster a sense of community is consistent with enhancing a range of housing options for a diverse population. Our zoning ordinance will increase options for affordability, simplicity of transportation, conservation of Rye's natural assets and housing opportunities for seniors in town.

Our vision for Rye does not require major changes to our transportation infrastructure. Our roads are adequate and well located. The modifications they require – traffic calming, shoulder widening, intersection control – will improve their safety and increase usage by pedestrians and cyclists. Our support of shared transportation options – park-and-ride usage, ridesharing, a bus route serving Rye needs – will require promotion and education. This will be supported by our involvement in ongoing regional transportation efforts.

The parameters of this vision extend to all members of our community, not just developers. Education will be important to our success. All will contribute to increasing our recycling of materials accepted at the Town's facility. Together we will continue to educate citizens about the need to minimize potentially hazardous chemical usage.

We will recognize that everyday compounds as lawn treatments, snow melt products, and such are beneficial only if used sparingly. Beyond that, we become polluters of our own waters. When we add to our houses, expand our driveways or build sheds, we increase the

Town's impervious surfaces burden. Each addition further minimizes the opportunity for water to infiltrate, naturally cleanse the water and recharge our aquifers. Impervious surfaces limit natural water cleansing and potentially cause flooding.

Having committed ourselves to preserving our natural resources to the maximum extent possible, we will have to learn to manage the nuisance species of plant life and wildlife that have increasingly enjoyed their safeguarded habitats. We will protect the value of Rye's uniqueness for native plants and animals. Where necessary, such as in our salt marshes, we will improve habitats.

We will do all of these things through formal and informal organizational structures. We know that Rye is rich in the amount of time that our volunteers give to the community in a myriad of ways. Our vision for Rye reinforces the bonds that form through that work, reinforcing the work of our town's employees and elected officials. Expanded dissemination of information will create a more seamless network of communications.

The sense of community in our schools will expand throughout the community. Our children strengthen the Town's identity through their sports accomplishments. They will learn about their roles as future leaders by being involved in matters of importance. School budgets will be increasingly recognized as an important part of local government.

We will support this vision by working together. We will support it by pursuing outside sources of funding for the improvements we require. We will support our vision by continuous re-assessment of what we have accomplished. This evaluation will assure that we are accomplishing that which is necessary to get where we want to go. We will protect our Semi-Rural and Coastal Character by protecting our Open Space, Coastal and Wetland Resources and managing growth.

CHAPTER 2 – DEMOGRAPHICS

According to the 2000 US Census, the Town of Rye had a population of 5,182, which reflected a growth rate of approximately 9% from 1990. The previous decade saw a growth of about 2.3%. The population of our town stayed near 1,000 for more than 100 years prior to the post WWII baby-boom era. The population grew rapidly during the 1940's, 50's and 60's, largely as a result of the growth of the Portsmouth Naval Shipyard and later Pease Air Force Base. In the 1970's, population growth moderated, and since 1980 the population has remained relatively stable as Pease closed and the shipyard downsized.

Table D-1 POPULATION CHANGES TOWN OF RYE			
1830 – 2000			
Year	Population	Change	Percent Change
1830	1,275	82	6.9%
1840	1,320	45	3.5%
1850	1,397	77	5.8%
1860	1,326	-71	-5.1%
1870	1,087	-239	-18.0%
1880	1,111	24	2.2%
1890	978	-133	-12.0%
1900	1,100	122	12.5%
1910	1,014	-86	-7.8%
1920	1,196	182	17.9%
1930	1,081	-115	-9.6%
1940	1,246	165	15.3%
1950	1,982	736	59.1%
1960	3,244	1,262	63.6%
1970	4,083	839	25.8%
1980	4,508	425	10.4%
1990	4,612	104	2.3%
2000	5182	570	9%

* Source 2000 Census

1.0 IN-MIGRATION

From 1990 to 2000 Rye had an in-migration of 409 persons. This is in contrast with 199 persons from 1980 to 1990, and 619 from 1970 to 1980. For the period from 1990 to 2000, Rye experienced a 10% in-migration rate; a sharp contrast to the 14% rate of in-migration during the 1970's and the 4% rate during the 1980's.

2.0 GROWTH COMPARISON WITH OTHER MUNICIPALITIES

Rye's rate of population growth is compared to our neighboring communities in the seacoast area. From 1990 to 2000, Rye's population growth was less than most other communities in the area. Portsmouth was the only community to lose population during this period.

3.0 HOUSING GROWTH AND HOUSEHOLD SIZE

From 2001 to 2005, Rye's housing grew at approximately 10 units per year. During the previous decade, the number of housing units grew from 2,443 to 2,645, a ten year increase of 202 units, or about 20 units per year.

Household size has decreased in Rye during the past 20 years. In 1980, the average household size in Rye was 2.61 persons. This figure decreased to 2.40 persons, per household during 1990 and to 2.35 persons during 2000. This decrease is a general trend statewide and nationwide for the past 20 years. Additional information on housing growth and household size may be found in the Housing Chapter of this document.

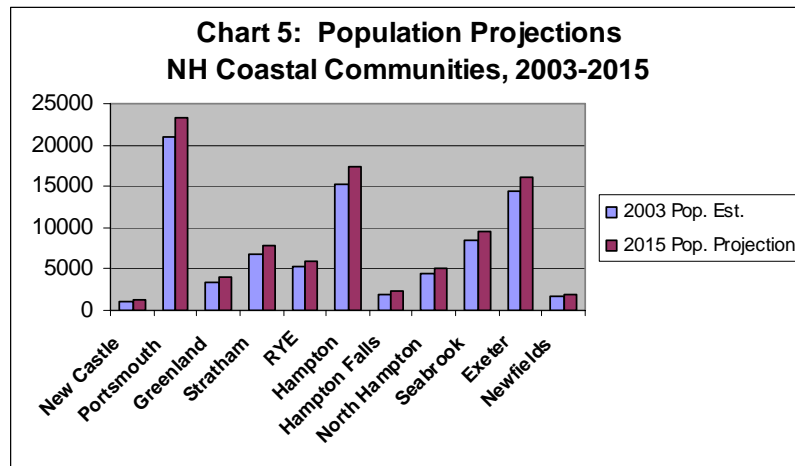
4.0 POPULATION PROJECTIONS

The NH Office of Energy and Planning (OEP) population projections, for municipalities of coastal Rockingham County are based on projections of county population, which is then allocated to municipalities based on the 1990-2000 trends in the share of total county population. OEP indicates small to moderate projected growth for each of the coastal communities shown in this chart. The Land Use Chapter contains information on possible build-out scenarios for Rye which may differ from these projected trends.

5.0 POPULATION CHARACTERISTICS: AGE OF RYE'S POPULATION

As was the case in 1990, the current overall trend is towards an older population in the age profile of Rye's population in 1980, 1990 and 2000. The percentage of the population in the 20 to 34 age group declined, while all persons above 34 increased from 1990 to 2000, with one of the largest increases in the 45-54 age groups. The aging of Rye's population is generally inconsistent with county and state trends. Our population is composed of a higher percentage of older residents than either the state or county. Further, the gap between the median age of the state's population and Rye's population is widening. Between 1990 and 2000 the median age of Rye's population increased almost 20 percent to 42.2 years.

Figure D-1 Population Projections



For planning purposes, trends in age distribution are important to note. The needs of the population shift as its age characteristics shift. As a result of these trends, Rye can expect less need for school capacity than in the past.

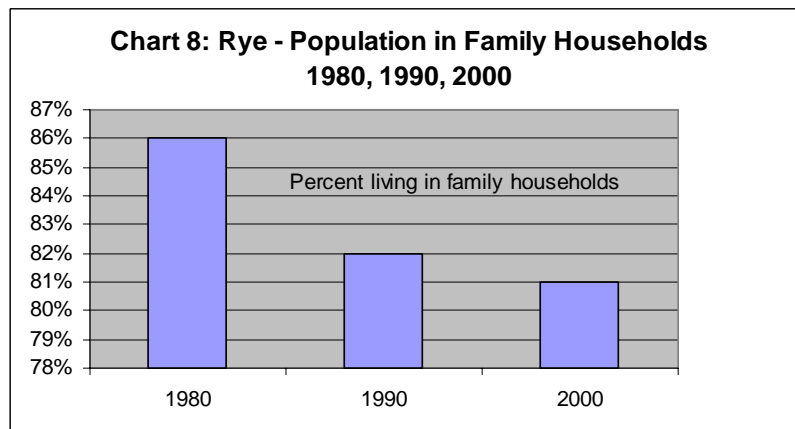
6.0 HOUSEHOLD AND FAMILY STATUS

The following are data about the household and family status of Rye's population. It is important to note that the U.S. Census defines:

- a **household** as all persons who occupy a housing unit (whether related or not);
- a **family** as persons living in the same housing unit who are related by birth, marriage or adoption. Thus, a family is a subset of a household.

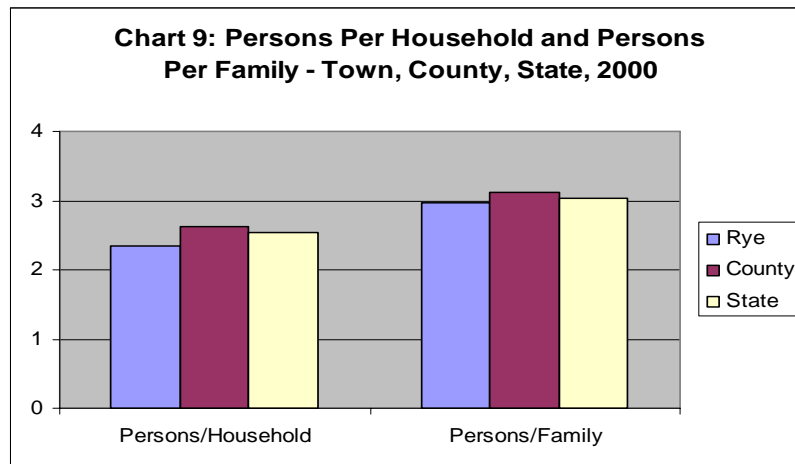
These data show that most of Rye's population lives in families, as do most of the populations of Rockingham County and New Hampshire. However, in keeping with the trends in our society, the portion of Rye's population living in families has declined from 91% in 1970 to 82% in 1990 and 81% in 2000.

Figure D-2 Population in Family Households



The next chart shows characteristics of persons per household and persons per family for Rye, Rockingham County, and New Hampshire. This chart indicates that the figure for persons per household is smaller for Rye than for the county and the state. However, Rye is fairly even with the state in persons per family, but slightly below the county.

Figure D-3 Persons Per Household and Persons



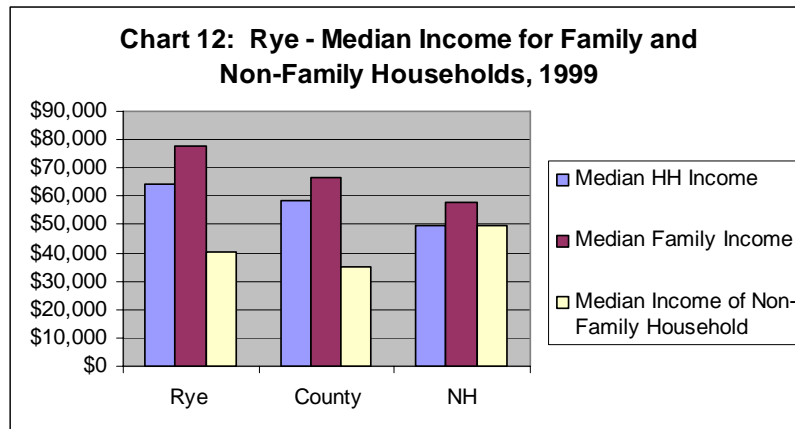
7.0 EDUCATION

Rye is a well educated community. Ninety-five percent of Rye's 2000 population had graduated from high school and over 50% of that population possessed at least a Bachelors Degree. These are considerably higher percentages than found in both the county and state.

8.0 INCOME

The median household income in Rye rose from \$42,000 in 1990 to \$65,000 in 2000. This compares with the Rockingham County median household income of \$58,000 in 2000. Rye's median household income was slightly above that of both the county and state during this time, with the exception of median income of non-family households. The number of persons in poverty status, under the age of 18, increased slightly from 1989-1999; while the number decreased considerably, for those persons over 18. Compared with the county and state labor forces, a higher percentage of Rye's labor force is composed of people in managerial and professional services. Paralleling these data are relatively low percentages of the labor force working in precision production, craft, repair, operator, fabricator and laborer occupations and in the manufacturing sector.

Figure D-4 Median Income for Family and Non-Family Households, 1999



Rye's population: (1) diminishing employment in the manufacturing sector; (2) increasing employment in the professional and services sectors; and (3) decreasing government employment. This demographic discussion of Rye compared with the county and state does not give all of the socio-economic details of the area, but gives a good indication of Rye's population trends, during the past 20 years.

CHAPTER 3 – LAND USE

VISION

Our vision for land use in Rye includes a community that is comfortable for those that live here, and desirable to those who are looking for a town with a good sense of heritage, open spaces, and excellent schools. Property ownership here will prove itself to be a first-rate investment.

Rye's land use policies will be fair, good for the community as a whole. Our decisions will support balances of choice, convenience, safety, security, conservation, and a sense of community. We will value our past and present, embracing change when we foresee that it improves the Town according to this Plan. Green Spaces will be for viewing and using.

In this vision we recognize that –

- The purpose of zoning is to safeguard the health, safety and general welfare of our citizens and property owners;
- Rye's current buildings include; single family homes of all sizes, small-lot beachfront houses, multi-family dwellings, vacation homes, manufactured housing, commercial development, in-house apartments, farms, and a regionally recognized seacoast educational center; and
- Our ability to incorporate these many land uses and protect significant portions of open space while still maintaining a "semi-rural" ambiance testifies to our ability to plan wisely.

OVERVIEW

The very intent of community planning is to lay the groundwork for deliberate and intelligent land use. By combining voices and visions, citizens guide communities and regions toward desirable landscapes. Legally, these visions must be committed to paper in the form of a Master Plan in order to prevent random rulings about how landowners can use their land. Through zoning, town representatives can protect the health, safety and welfare of the community, but it must be done with respect for individual property rights.

1.0 PLANNING BOARD AND ZONING BOARD OF ADJUSTMENT ROLES

The Planning Board can publicly establish certain land regulations that address the specifics of project applications and specifications. However, types of projects which are not allowed must be set down in the Master Plan as accepted by the community after two public hearings. This document tells the Planning Board and the Zoning Board of Adjustment (BOA) essentially what kind of development Rye wants and where it will be allowed.

It is vital to remember the BOA's role in the planning process. Developers' requests for variances and special exceptions must not be granted unless they reinforce the wishes of the Master Plan. This leads to the BOA's role as an arbiter of disagreements between developers and the Planning Board as to which parts of projects conform to the zoning and which fall outside of the established zoning ordinance parameters. It is a difficult role given that the BOA may grant variances and special exceptions⁺⁺ which fall outside the literal zoning guidelines but may fit within the spirit of the ordinance. An old saying is, "Only the BOA can interpret the zoning and the only thing the BOA can do is interpret the zoning."

Nonetheless, where it can do so without unduly denying property owners the right to reasonably use their land and without causing harm to neighbors, the BOA must adhere to the letter of the law. Allowing "fringe" cases to deviate from the Master Plan on a case-by-case basis allows the sort of piecemeal creep that undermines our planning efforts.

2.0 DEVELOPMENT OF RYE THROUGHOUT THE YEARS AND CONSERVATION

The development of Rye has been predominantly residential. There is some commercial development found along Route One, and there are small business and commercial districts dispersed throughout town. There is no traditional commercial village center.

Table L-1 provides an interesting look at a study that evaluated aerial photographs produced at various times over the course of 36 years. The Complex Systems Research Center at the University of New Hampshire performed this study⁺ of all the communities in Rockingham County in order to quantify land use change. By interpreting aerial photographs from the years 1962, 1974 and 1998, this study tracked land use changes in a number of different categories to show how the region's landscape had changed. The table shows the breakdown of land use categories for Rye.

This study shows that Rye has maintained a remarkable mix of land use considering its location on the valuable New Hampshire seacoast.

Looking at residential uses, in 1962 the Town had 1,135 acres in residential land use. By 1998 this total had increased to 1,776 acres, a change of 641 acres. That represents an increase in residential development of over 50% during that 36-year period.

Unfortunately for our goal of maintaining the semi rural character of Rye, this increase had to come nearly entirely at the expense of our agricultural sector. The number of acres in agricultural use in 1964 was 679. This total had decreased to 249 acres in 1998, which represents a decrease of 63 percent. However, the town wide total of 3 percent active

⁺⁺ The zoning terms "special exception," "variance," and others are defined in the Concordance.

⁺ It is important to note that there are some problems inherent with interpreting aerial photographs taken over a period of thirty years. The scales of the maps differ, leading to varying degrees of quality for interpretation purposes. In addition, the science of aerial photography has improved over this time frame so that more information can be gleaned from the more recent photographs. These factors conspire to create unexplainable differences in some of the categories. These issues notwithstanding, the study offers valuable insight into the trends of land use change in town and provides a solid baseline for future studies as well.

agricultural use remains high for our region; Rye shows a significant retention of agricultural activity in a county increasingly turning away from its agricultural traditions. With the very high rate of retention for forested land, the Town of Rye is in the enviable position of having been successful in retaining rural character in a region that highly values it but has been losing such character in large measures over the last three decades.

Table L-1 Rye, New Hampshire Land Use Designations from 1962 to 1998							
		1962		1974		1998	
	Land Use Category	Acres	% of Town	Acres	% of Town	Acres	% of Town
Developed Uses	Residential	1,135.5	13.5	1,356.8	16.2	1,776.6	21.2
	Industrial/Commercial	49.0	0.6	68.5	0.8	78.9	0.9
	Mixed Urban	37.9	0.5	34.4	0.4	70.5	0.8
	Transportation/Roads	132.9	1.6	143.5	1.7	157.6	1.9
	Railroads	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
	Auxiliary Transportation	1.1	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Playing Fields/Recreation	3.3	0.0	119.5	1.4	185.2	2.2
Undeveloped	Active Agriculture	679.3	8.1	345.0	4.1	249.1	3.0
	Farmsteads	2.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
	Forested	4,700.4	56.1	4,582.2	54.7	4,386.7	52.3
	Water	366.2	4.4	372.2	4.4	377.2	4.5
	Open Wetlands	772.8	9.2	774.8	9.2	797.4	9.5
	Idle/Other Open	499.0	6.0	581.9	6.9	299.4	3.6
Totals		8380	100	8380	100	8380	100
		1962		1974		1998	
	Aggregate Categories	Acres	% of Town	Acres	% of Town	Acres	% of Town
	Developed Uses	1,360.6	16.2	1,724.1	20.6	2,269.8	27.1
	Undeveloped Uses	7,019.7	83.8	6,656.2	79.4	6,109.8	72.9
Totals		8380	100	8380	100	8380	100

The forested category represented 56 percent of the town's acreage in 1964. Remarkably, this category decreased by less than four percent over the thirty-six year period of comparison. Total forested acres went from 4,700 in 1964 to 4,386 in 1998. Still, it covers an amazing 52 percent of the acreage in town. This fact reflects not only a commitment to "open space" on the part of our community as a whole but it also reflects individual landowners' preference for woodlands on their private lots.

Another trend important to note is the increase over the study period of acreage in the category of "playing fields / recreation". In 1964, 3.3 acres were classified as "playing fields / recreation". By 1998 this total had increased to 185 acres, a nearly 60-fold increase.

These changes in the face of Rye were not by happenstance. There have been sustained efforts by our Conservation Commission, Parsons Park Corporations and the Rye Open Space Committee contributing significantly to these efforts. In addition, the Town and its recreation supporters have committed to creating and conserving recreation facilities. Rye citizens have shown overwhelming support for these groups and their initiatives.

3.0 Existing Land Use

The information in Table L-1 was based on the visual interpretation of existing land uses. As such, it was essentially blind to ownership or lot boundaries. Table L-2 below presents brief descriptions of Rye's zoning districts and the acreage found in each according to the build-out study completed in 2002 for the Town of by the Rockingham Planning Commission. Further elaboration can be found in Appendix B and in Rye's Zoning Ordinance. The districts discussed are as shown on the zoning map.

Below, are brief descriptions of Rye's zoning and the acreage found in each of the districts. Further elaboration can be found in Appendix C and in Rye's Zoning Ordinance.

Table L-2 Zoning Districts, Their Sizes & Allowed Uses in 2002, Rye, New Hampshire			
<u>District</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>%</u>	<u>Permitted Uses</u>
Single Residence (SRD)	5268	74	Single-family homes, farms, and limited home occupations. And by special exception*: mobile homes, condominium conversions, hospitals, convalescent or nursing homes, and homes for the elderly
General Residence (GRD)	450	6	Same as SRD & two single-family units
Business (BD)	55	1	Same as SRD & small retail, service enterprises, lodging establishments. By special exception*: other expanded uses (including the sale of petroleum products)
Commercial (CD)	221	3	Same as BD but no 1-, 2-family dwellings. Vehicle salesrooms, lumberyards and building supplies; professional offices, financial institutions. Other uses by special exception* provided that they are not detrimental or injurious to the neighborhood
Conservation	650	9	Open space and forestry, trails, picnic areas, minimal walkways and structures to support the same
Public Recreation	443	6	Recreational purposes on lands owned by the Town of Rye, the Rye School district and the State of New Hampshire reserved for those purposes
Total	7087		

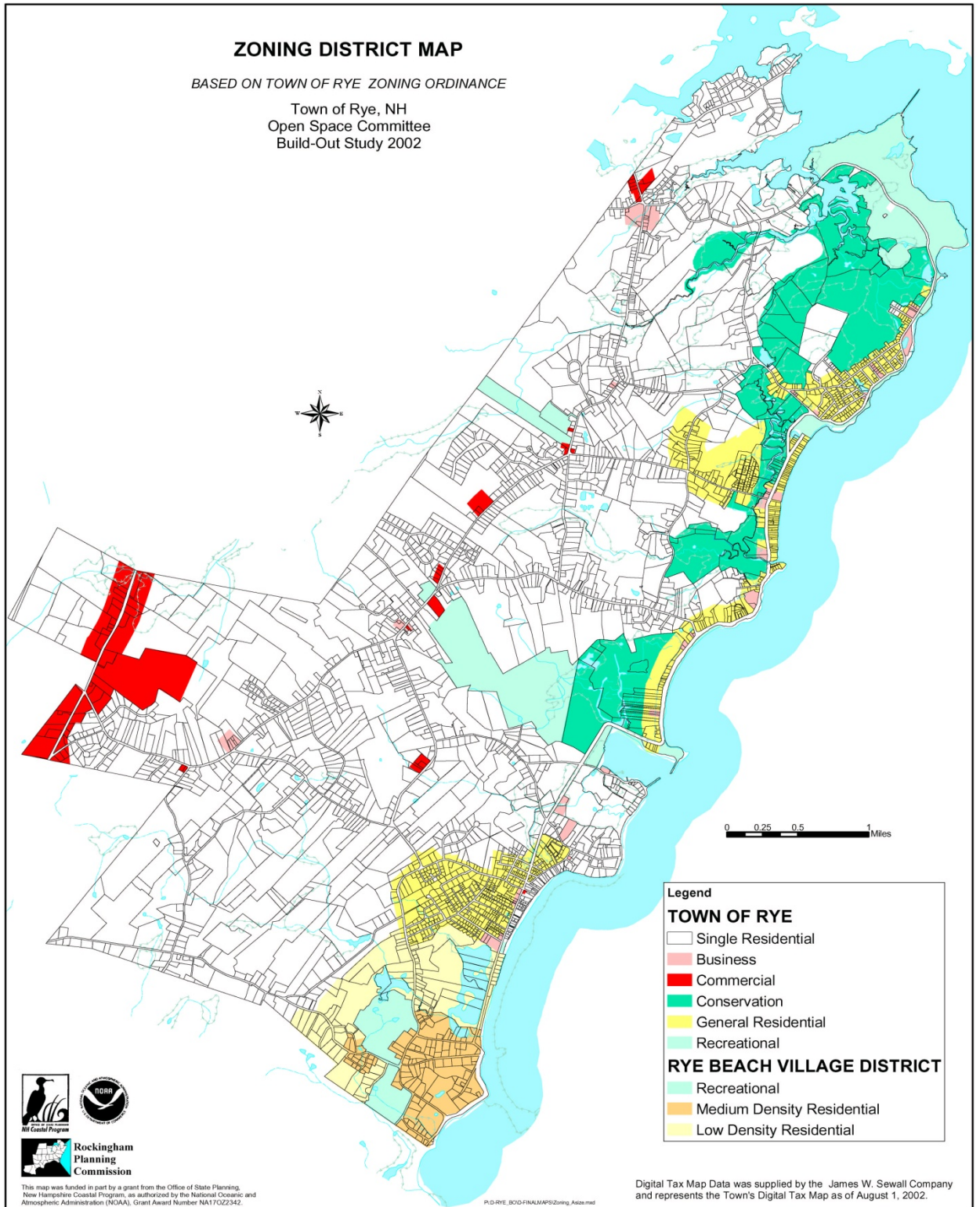
4.0 FUTURE LAND USE

We have developed a number of strategies to guide our patterns of development. Zoning has historically been used to establish major areas for residential and commercial development. In the past, these uses have for the most part been segregated. New residential uses have been primarily developed in the interior areas of town. Commercial development has been, with few exceptions, allowed along the US Route 1 corridor.

The future land use map found in this chapter is a representation of the desired direction of future development in town. It is a useful tool for visualizing the recommended development pattern but is not intended to be a formal zoning map. The boundaries are general guidelines that will change as zoning is changed by the townspeople.

Insert zoning map

Future Zoning Map



5.0 WETLANDS, SHORELANDS AND OTHER LAND USE

To understand all kinds of development in our town, one must understand that we have always put a high priority on protecting natural resources. The Town's wetlands, shorelands, and other land use ordinances influence nearly every development proposal that is reviewed by the Planning Board.

Wetlands and Flood Zone Ordinances regulate development around our wetlands and rivers. These resources perform vital ecological functions, provide open space, wildlife habitat and passive recreation opportunities, all of which contribute to the town's rural character. In addition, by avoiding the disruption of our wetlands we safeguard our water quality, public health, and natural ability to handle excess water during flood events.

Floodplains are undesirable locations for development because of the associated risks to life and property. In addition, construction in the floodplains worsens flood hazards downstream. For example, the inundation of septic systems can cause water pollution and public health hazards. Further, due to ledge and water concerns, Rye has very limited opportunities for additional development.

Rye citizens have also taken non-zoning actions to preserve the Town's rural flavor. Both the Open Space Committee and Conservation Commission have undertaken programs to purchase easements or land in order to insure against future development. Due to the Town's extensive holdings, these properties are shown in Appendix B. The town should continue to aggressively acquire easements and property in order to protect open space.

Our extensive commitment to publicly held conservation land complements the zoning in promoting the rural feeling. The fair treatment of landowners, older citizens and new families requires innovative approaches to development. Rye simply does not have much buildable land (i.e., outside of environmental buffers, not on ledge) to sustain long road frontages and large lot development.

6.0 HOUSING

There are a number of in-house apartments and multi-family units in Town that provide housing diversity. There are also multiple dwellings on a single lot. However, some of these multiple residences and all of the multi-dwelling lots exist as non-conforming lots with respect to zoning in which they are located. Zoning is intended to discourage non-conforming use. Thus, over time many of these non-conforming multi-family sites may disappear and be replaced by structures that conform to zoning.

It is not in the best interest of the town to lose this housing variety. Rye desires as much affordable housing as is possible in view of the cost of land. Where we now enjoy housing variety, the course of minimal impact would be to safeguard that which is an established part of our community. The manufactured housing park located on Route 1 is an example of affordable housing. If this park were to be sold and redeveloped as a commercial enterprise, as it is presently zoned, the town would lose 50 units of affordable housing.

Developable backlands in residentially zoned areas may be appropriate for new alternative approaches. Some of the alternatives we can consider are; planned unit residential developments and retirement communities.

Large backland tracts which are suitable for residential use could be developed – consistent with protecting the environment – at lower overall density levels than the land along the town roads. In exchange for the lower density, these lands could be allowed some exceptions to the existing requirements in the zoning ordinance as discussed below.

- For Single Residence Zones, the density of backland development could be allowed on lots of at least 10 acres in exchange for a reduction in the frontage requirement.
- In General Residence Zones, multi-family residences could be developed with the same conditions.

On March 13, 2006, we passed a new zoning classification called “Retirement Community Development” (RCD), Section 401 of the Zoning Ordinance. This new classification requiring 10 or more acres, allows for 8-16 detached or attached (town houses) with reduced side and front setbacks. Additional units may be allowed (up to 22) if a project provides at least 15% affordable housing units. One or two additional units may be allowed for “excellence in design”.

The developed area envelope would be set back on the sides, front and rear with natural screening vegetation. Each unit would have no more than 2 bedrooms and would have covered parking. If sewers were not available at a road adjacent to the property, a single development-wide septic system would be recommended. Access roads and driveways would be private and maintained by an owners association. The entire RCD would be limited to occupants over 62 years of age.

On the traditional Single Residence lots, the larger sizes of homes built in Rye in recent years have been more compatible with large lots. However, there have been concurrent surface water drainage management problems which have manifested in recent years and warrant review of density and coverage requirements.

Environmental, health and safety issues have arisen with the expanded use of retention and detention ponds to control surface water flow in developments and on individual lots. Ponds have, at times, become stagnant mosquito breeding areas. In some areas they have inadvertently served as collectors of lawn chemicals, animal wastes and other pollutants. Storms flush the pond’s polluted water into our surface waters. These activities impact abutters and the Town after the development has been completed.

These issues should be recognized in any proposed future development by requiring an environmental escrow account which would be held by the Town for three to five years following completion of the development to ensure that any remedial measures function correctly as designed.

7.0 SALT MARSHES & MOSQUITO CONTROL

Mosquito control is very important in any town on the New Hampshire seacoast. Salt marshes are of prime importance as a place for natural predation of mosquito larvae.

Restoration is being pursued in Rye based on a 1994 study prepared by the USDA Soil Conservation Service. The primary approach in the marsh restoration process is to restore the natural tidal flow of salt water into and throughout the marsh. This is accomplished by replacing all blocked or undersized culverts and by dredging channels. Through our Conservation Commission, we will continue to compete for grants from federal and state environmental agencies. These funds will complement those which we will raise from individual contributions and private environmental foundations. To assure the effectiveness, a program of increased frequency of sampling both the streams and in-shore coastal waters should be funded. Results would be used to document and better locate what are now viewed as “non-point” sources of pollution.

8.0 HISTORY AND OUR HISTORIC DISTRICT

Rye’s Historic District should be maintained with only modest expansion beyond its present coverage. There are only a few additional historic buildings in any area contiguous to the present district. Other historically and architecturally significant structures are dispersed throughout Rye. The goal of preserving our heritage could be advanced by the formation of a Heritage Commission. These changes would require the Town to look into this in more detail.

In addition, to honoring our natural heritage, we also want to recognize and protect elements that combine to recall history that makes Rye unique. Every community has a distinctive sense of character resulting from the way that life has been lived there over time. This sense of place gives stability to the town and thus enhances its attractiveness for residents.

Next Steps

1.0 HOUSING

A number of specific land use items for discussion and action are covered more specifically in other chapters herein. Building upon an established record of planning that predominately supported the construction of single-family homes; we need to ensure that Rye continues to provide balanced coverage of the housing spectrum. Several specific housing options need to be addressed within the context of our overall land use plans.

- We will address the suitability of the US Route 1 area. This area is already a high use area due to its being a major transportation artery for the area. The atmosphere along that corridor already differs significantly from that found nearer the Town Center or near the coast.

- We will aggressively address options for conservative development. Given that most desirable lots suitable for construction with a 200-ft frontage have already been exhausted, we need to develop alternate methods for ensuring that future development takes advantage of existing constraints to create desirable housing options. Among these will be the introduction of innovative subdivisions where various parameters intended to safeguard green space and privacy are shared within the development rather than on a parcel-by-parcel basis.
- Our manufactured housing area is unprotected from future development. We will address the safeguarding of this existing use through zoning changes. These mobile homes are already an established part of the face of Rye and they represent an important piece in the provision of a diversity of housing options.
- We will further explore mixed-use options in our zoning.

2.0 WASTE WATER TREATMENT

Several issues related to waste treatment need our consideration.

- We will consider the extension of Portsmouth provided and user-financed sewerage service in Rye along Route One to support further development within the Lafayette Road corridor. We acknowledge that we are pushing limits of what septic options we have.
- The sewerage needs of the remainder of Rye's coastal area which are not served by public sewerage should be studied to develop incentives for owners to maintain safe non-polluting septic systems.
- In response to problems of detention and retention ponds, following the completion of recent projects, we will consider requiring an environmental escrow account of developers. The Town would hold funds for three to five years following completion of development to ensure that all remedial measures function correctly as designed.
- A program of increased frequency of sampling both the streams and in shore coastal waters should also be funded. Any negative results would feed back into a septic improvement plan.

3.0 REUSE OF BUILDINGS

We will consider the uses of the former police station within the global parameters of municipal space requirements.

4.0 CONSERVATION AND LAND PROTECTION

We will maintain our interests and activities in regard to safeguarding Rye's naturally beautiful landscape.

- The town should continue to aggressively acquire easements and property, thus expanding existing protected areas. Landowners should be educated on their options for contributing to the Town's conservation resources while simultaneously safeguarding their individual investments.
- Sound management of all protected areas should provide for desirable wildlife habitat and extend wildlife corridors.
- The town should also strive to protect remaining agricultural activities whenever the opportunity arises. In instances where agricultural uses may be abandoned, efforts to preserve these lands with the goal of potential future agricultural use should be pursued.

CHAPTER 4 – HOUSING

Vision

We recognize that –

- The majority of our citizens want Rye to remain semi-rural;
- This desire was evident in the 2003 passage of a \$5 million bond to purchase conservation land;
- There are increasing demands for housing in Rye, with the increase in population growth in the Seacoast region;
- This will make it challenging to maintain Rye as a semi-rural community unless changes are made in our zoning.

Thus we envision for our future a community which continues to value its winding roads, stands of trees and coastal shores.

Our housing options will adjust in response to shifts in our residents' needs. Our variety of choices will be safeguarded through local ordinances to ensure we do not have to leave Rye to have an affordable home.

Overview

The vast majority of Rye's land is zoned for residential use. It is largely a town where people live and work elsewhere. The relatively slow population growth contrasts the fairly rapid population growth in surrounding communities.

Population information for Rye is displayed in Table H-1. In addition to highlighting information regarding Rye, the tables in this chapter show information for other communities. This set of communities has been chosen due to their similar position as coastal towns. On these tables the combined information for Rye and the other coastal communities constitute the field entitled "REGION". This has been done so that Rye can compare itself within the context of similarly situated communities.

Table H-1 Southeastern New Hampshire Regional Population Trends

Town	1980	1990	2000	2003	Average Annual % Change 1980-1990	Average Annual % Change 1990-2000
Exeter	11,024	12,481	14,058	14,505	1.2%	1.2%
Hampton	10,493	12,278	14,937	15,266	1.6%	2.0%
Hampton Falls	1,372	1,503	1,880	1,988	0.9%	2.3%
New Castle	936	840	1,010	1,023	-1.1%	1.9%
Newfields	817	888	1,551	1,626	0.8%	5.7%
Newington	716	990	775	794	3.3%	-2.4%
N. Hampton	3,425	3,637	4,259	4,496	0.6%	1.6%
Portsmouth	26,254	25,925	20,784	21,051	-0.1%	-2.2%
Rye	4,508	4,612	5,182	5,290	0.2%	1.2%
Seabrook	5,917	6,503	7,934	8,391	0.9%	2.0%
Stratham	2,507	4,955	6,355	6,757	7.1%	2.5%
REGION	70,098	77,380	81,933	84,564	1.5%	1.4%
STATE OF NH	920,475	1,109,117	1,235,786	1,291,573	1.9%	1.1%

Source US Census, 1980, 1990, and 2000

In the 1980's Rye's population grew at an average annual rate of 0.02%. This is the lowest rate in the area for all communities that had a positive growth rate. In comparison, the State of New Hampshire experienced annual growth rates of 1.9% in the decade of the 80's, almost ten times the rate experienced in the Town of Rye.

This situation changed in the 1990's with Rye seeing growth much more in line with surrounding communities as well as that of the State as a whole. Rye's annual average growth rate in the 1990's was 1.2% which was slightly higher than the 1.1% average annual growth rate experienced statewide during the same decade. Correspondingly, the average annual growth rate for the other towns in the RPC region was 1.1%, just slightly lower than the rate for Rye.

Rye's population increase from 1990-2000 resulted in a similar increase in new housing units during the same period. From 1990-2000, 211 housing units were constructed in Rye, sufficient to house the 570 new residents that came to town during the decade. These figures are appropriate when considering the average household size for owner-occupied structures in Rye is 2.4 persons.

Table H-2 provides housing information for Rye and its surrounding communities for the same period. It is interesting to note that the Town's population grew by only 104 people for the decade of the 1980's but housing units increased by 567 during the same period. The decade of the 1990's was a cooling off period that saw community growth settle into a pattern more in alignment with that of the State as a whole. In fact, the State and the Town had the same average annual growth rate for the decade at 0.8%.

Table H-2 Southeastern New Hampshire Housing Units

Town	1980	1990	2000	Average Annual Growth Rate 1990-2000
Exeter	4,401	5,333	6,107	1.4 %
Greenland	733	1,074	1,244	1.5 %
Hampton	4,444	8,602	9,349	0.8 %
Hampton Falls	483	591	729	2.1 %
New Castle	352	408	488	1.8 %
Newfields	280	323	532	5.1 %
Newington	257	328	305	-0.7 %
N. Hampton	1,252	1,492	1,782	1.8 %
Portsmouth	9,872	11,369	10,186	-1.1 %
Rye	1,867	2,434	2,645	0.8 %
Seabrook	2,520	3,469	4,406	2.4 %
Stratham	843	1,917	2,371	2.1 %
REGION	25,437	37,340	40,144	1.5 %
STATE of NH	349,001	504,541	546,524	0.8 %

Source: U.S. Census

The interpretation of New Hampshire statutes by the State's courts suggests that towns are responsible for both accepting a fair share of population growth and housing. Towns are also responsible for the provision of opportunities for a variety of housing types to be built throughout town. Rye's ability to provide housing for all of its residents can best be analyzed by examining the types of housing and the economic status of its residents.

At this time, Rye's zoning ordinance does not provide for a range of housing types. As a result, single-family residences compose the bulk of the housing stock. However, the mix of housing types available in Rye does not differ substantially from many of the communities in the region. Table H-3 illustrates Rye's housing stock relative to the surrounding towns.

Table H-3 Southeastern New Hampshire Housing Stock in 2003

Town	Single Family Detached	Multi-Family	Mobile Home	Total Housing Units
Exeter	2,869	2,417	1,062	6,348
Greenland	1,024	297	6	1,327
Hampton	5,359	4,037	276	9,672
Hampton Falls	718	54	10	782
New Castle	451	59	0	510
Newfields	501	54	11	566
Newington	269	43	2	314
N. Hampton	1,449	146	294	1,889
Portsmouth	4,182	5,902	279	10,363
Rye	2,257	357	75	2,689
Seabrook	1,764	1,491	1,167	4,322
Stratham	1,886	696	15	2,597
REGION	26,911	15,553	3,197	41,379
STATE of NH	365,005	176,528	37,678	579,211

Source: Current Estimates and Trends in New Hampshire's Housing Supply, 2003 Update; NH Office of State Planning, 2004.

As shown in Table H-3 above, slightly more than 16% of the housing units in Rye are either multi-family or manufactured units. This statistic is comparable to other towns in southeast New Hampshire.

To evaluate the impact of local housing policies on the housing stock, it is helpful to examine values and rental costs. Tables H-4 and H-5 present this information in different ways.

Table H-4 presents U.S. Census information from 2000 indicating median* home values and median renter values for the Town of Rye, the surrounding communities and the State of New Hampshire. Property values in the Town of Rye are among the highest in the State. As displayed in Table H-4, the Town of Rye has the second highest median home value in coastal NH, surpassed only by the Town of New Castle. The median value of \$311,100 also far surpasses the State median value of \$133,300.

Note also that the median value of homes in Rye increased roughly 30% between census years. In 1990 the median home value was \$214,100. By 2000 this value had increased to \$311,100. Rye is the only town in the region to see this level of appreciation. What sets Rye apart?

* A median value indicates the number in the center of a group of values, in this case, housing prices: half the prices were higher than the median cost shown, half were lower. By contrast, the average is calculated: the sum of all values in a group is divided by the number of values in that group.

Table H-4 Southeastern New Hampshire's Median Housing Values and Rents

Town	Median Home Value		Median Monthly Rental	
	1990	2000	1990	2000
Exeter	154,000	170,000	539	702
Greenland	168,100	213,000	690	885
Hampton	162,500	190,400	540	682
Hampton Falls	221,200	266,300	583	821
New Castle	295,000	566,600	600	1,462
Newfields	142,800	196,500	517	656
Newington	197,300	256,800	539	805
N. Hampton	187,400	211,300	547	706
Portsmouth	137,600	168,600	497	727
Rye	214,100	311,100	611	929
Seabrook	145,500	181,900	514	686
Stratham	177,700	270,200	661	865
REGION	182,767	250,225	570	827
STATE of NH	129,400	133,300	491	646

1990 Census Data STF1; 2000 Census Data Available Fall 2002

The most obviously distinguishing feature about Rye is its geography: more than half of New Hampshire's entire coastline falls within Rye. This proximity and ready accessibility to the ocean make it highly desirable for residents as well as second-home owners. Rye's cultivated interest in maintaining a semi-rural atmosphere and support of quality education also contribute to the richness of this jewel. Thus, as older buildings have aged, lots have been purchased, old structures torn down, and new, more modern homes built in their places.

Table H-5 offers a more recent look at property values in the town using real estate transfer records. Although the dollar figures differ substantially from the U.S. Census figures of just two years earlier, other trends remain the same. The average sales price of \$471,950 is significantly higher than the value reflected by the U.S. Census. However, Rye's position as the town with the second highest sales average again mirrors the findings of the 2000 Census.

Table H-5 Rye, New Hampshire Home Sales Data (1/02-12/03)

	All Home Sales		Single Family (Non-Condominium)		Condominiums		Mobile Homes	
Town/Area	# of Sales	Avg Price (\$)	# of Sales	Avg Price (\$)	# of Sales	Avg Price (\$)	# of Sales	Avg Price (\$)
Exeter	800	228,793	437	328,342	229	143,492	134	49,921
Greenland	122	295,318	88	340,108	34	179,390	N/A	N/A
Hampton	1069	268,237	547	328,417	485	216,942	37	50,913
Hampton Falls	94	347,635	80	388,849	14	112,129	N/A	N/A
New Castle	39	799,920	36	762,413	3	1,250,000	N/A	N/A
Newfields	61	344,246	60	347,067	1	175,000	N/A	N/A
Newington	24	470,494	23	480,733	1	235,000	N/A	N/A
N. Hampton	215	386,871	152	508,368	14	185,376	49	67,554
Portsmouth	1040	265,365	582	310,058	424	221,400	34	48,583
Rye	198	471,950	184	477,137	13	432,915	1	25,000
Seabrook	385	239,109	221	330,117	48	214,389	116	75,953
Stratham	405	294,472	199	352,361	203	238,809	3	221,089
REGION	4452	367,700	2609	412,831	1469	300,403	374	67,377

Source: Real Data Corp.

Table H-6 provides additional information about southeastern New Hampshire's housing availability. Rye stands out in two ways relative to its neighbors. First, Rye has a disproportionate number of vacant units when compared to other communities. At nearly 18% of the total units in town, this figure is more than double the usual figure. Closer investigation of the U.S. Census data reveals; however, that 386 of these 469 units are further defined as "vacant only seasonally." This makes sense in a community where many residences are second homes.

Table H-6 2000 Housing, Ownership & Occupancy in Southeastern New Hampshire

Town	Total Housing Units	Occupied Housing Units	Vacant Housing Units	Owner-Occupied Housing Units	Renter-Occupied Housing Units	Household Size-Owner Occupied	Household Size-Renter Occupied
Exeter	6,107	5,898	209	3,908	1,918	2.5	1.9
Greenland	1,244	1,204	40	983	221	2.8	2.1
Hampton	9,349	6,465	2,884	4,402	2,063	2.4	1.9
Hampton Falls	729	704	24	629	75	2.7	2.1
New Castle	488	443	45	367	76	2.3	2.2
Newfields	532	516	16	463	53	3.1	2.4
Newington	305	294	11	229	65	2.6	2.2
N. Hampton	1,782	1,671	111	1,456	215	2.6	2.1
Portsmouth	10,186	9,875	311	4,936	4,939	2.3	1.8
Rye	2,645	2,176	469	1,756	419	2.4	1.9
Seabrook	4,066	3,425	641	2,154	1,271	2.4	2.1
Stratham	2,371	2,306	65	2,057	249	2.8	2.3
REGION	39,804	34,974	4,826	28,166	11,565	2.6	2.1
STATE of NH	547,024	474,606	72,418	330,700	143,906	2.7	2.1

Source: 2000 US Census

The second area in which Rye differs from the surrounding communities is in household size. At 2.4 persons per owner-occupied unit, only two communities (New Castle and Portsmouth) have smaller occupancy figures. Similarly, at 1.9 persons per renter-occupied unit, only three communities in the region have smaller household sizes than Rye.

Most housing specialists agree that the affordability threshold for housing cost should be approximately 30% of household income. That is, the members of a household are enjoying “affordable housing” if no more than 30% of their income is spent on their physical housing. While there is no direct way of determining the number of persons in Rye that meet that threshold, there is information available that details the range of incomes in town.

The following graph (Figure H-1) from the Regional Planning Commission’s regional housing needs assessment shows that Rye has a slightly greater percentage of “very low income” residents than the rest of the region. It has a lower percentage of low- and moderate-income households relative to other towns in the area. And as one might expect along the coast, the town has a greater percentage of households in the category of “above moderate income.”

Figure H-1 Households by Income Range, 1999

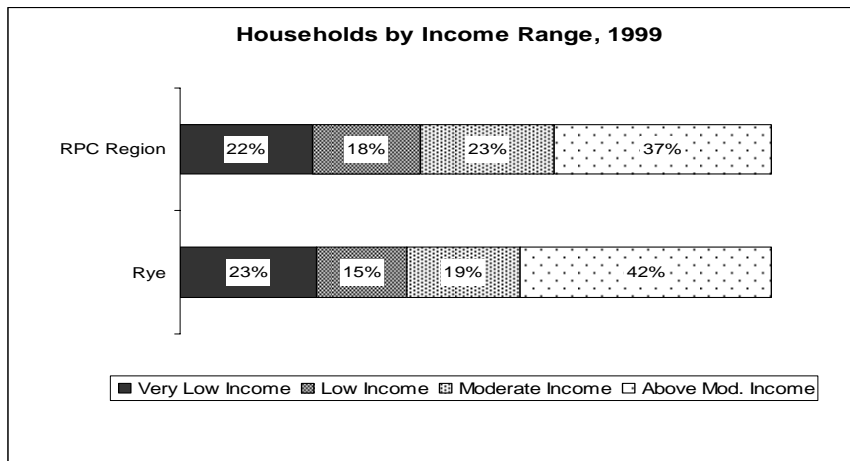


Table H-7 lists the median household incomes for the communities in our area, as derived from US Census 2000 data. The calculated home purchase prices that would be considered affordable for those median incomes are also included.

Table H-7 Maximum Supportable House Prices for Median Household Incomes in Southeastern NH

Town / Area	Median Household Income, 2000 Census	Max. supportable house price, Based on Census 2000 Median Household Income
Exeter	\$49,618	\$136,450
Greenland	\$62,172	\$170,973
Hampton	\$54,419	\$149,652
Hampton Falls	\$76,348	\$209,957
New Castle	\$83,708	\$230,197
Newfields	\$71,375	\$196,281
Newington	\$59,464	\$163,526
North Hampton	\$66,696	\$183,414
Portsmouth	\$45,195	\$124,286
Rye	\$63,152	\$172,002
Seabrook	\$42,874	\$117,904
Stratham	\$76,726	\$210,997
Region	\$62,546	\$172,002

Source: 2000 US Census

Table H-7 shows that a household with a median income of \$63,152 in 2000 could afford to purchase a house costing \$172,002 at that time. However, the data from Table H-4 (also based on 2000 census data) indicated that the median home price in Rye was over \$300,000. Actual sales data from 2002 and 2003 (in Table H-5) indicated a median sale price of well over \$400,000. Our median income resident could only afford half of that price. These figures suggest a wide discrepancy between what we can afford and what we are buying.

How does one explain the apparent disparities between modest incomes, affordability, and affluence in Rye? The ability to buy a house based on one's income differs from one's ability to remain in a house that was purchased long ago when real estate prices were lower. People who established homes in Rye long ago may have long since paid off their reasonable mortgages or inherited the family homestead and now live on modest retirement incomes.

Census 2000 data suggests that Rye is typical of Rockingham County in that 50% to 60% of each community's residents have been in their homes at least 5 years. Our own 2002 opinion survey breaks these numbers down further as shown in Table H-8.

Table H-8 – Housing Tenure in Rye, NH	
Years living in Rye	% of total citizenry
0 – 2	8.5 %
3 – 5	14.6 %
6 – 10	15.6 %
11 – 20	20.8 %
20+	32.5 %
Native	8.1 %

Fully 40% of our residents have lived here at least 20 years. More than half of our residents have lived here over ten years. Both of these groups would have purchased their homes well before that 30% home price jump from 1990 to 2000. About a third of us have come to town despite escalating housing and renting prices of the past ten years.

Today's property assessments are based on current home sales prices. These in turn are based on the current prices of land and construction. Today's tax rates are based upon today's revenue requirements. Rye can no longer claim a resort, nor do we benefit from its stream of tourist dollars, although we do still have our beaches and the state parks. Our marshes and wetlands are protected to the exclusion of development. Higher population density, greater demands for services and rising municipal costs have driven up taxes.

Thus we have an affordability conundrum. Within our community, those of modest means who have been here a long time own their homes but are squeezed by property taxes. Those with greater means can afford to move into town purchasing properties in a coastal community with amenities. There is little room for today's working families to become our neighbors.

More than 80% of Rye households own single-family homes. Where the preponderance of Rye is zoned single-family residential, there will be little opportunity for new young families to enter the community. Many think this helps to keep a lid on education expenses and also keeps traffic down. In reality, taxes have continued going up. Traffic volumes have continued rising. What is happening is that our population is aging without the vitality of new youth coming into town.

The existence of affordable units in Rye is found in pockets of non-conforming, legally existing land uses. Some units are located in a manufactured housing development such as Adam's Mobile Home Park in the town's commercial zone. The Planning Board met with the current landowner in 2006 and discussed the importance of the units and ways to guard them from being bought and replaced. The owner is looking at the land and will be contacting the board to discuss a possible zone change in 2008 to protect the manufactured homes.

It is very common for the discussion of "affordable housing" to become synonymous with low-income housing. When this happens, the general public often assumes that there will be drastic increases in housing density, increased education costs and deteriorating neighborhoods.

The education effort in this instance should be the emphasis that affordable housing, frequently called "workforce housing," is geared toward individuals that are a part of every community. Police officers, teachers and firefighters are often unable to afford housing in the seacoast but would be valuable neighbors.

Another area of concern regarding diversity in housing opportunities relates to age-restricted housing. This is a particularly important topic for Rye because there is a significant senior population in town. According to the 2000 US census reports, Rye's senior population (all residents aged 55 and older) accounts for nearly 30% of the Town's total population. This is about a third more seniors than the regional percentage.

The federal Fair Housing Act has established guidelines which permit communities to allow discrimination in housing opportunity in favor of senior residents. These age-restricted developments fall into two categories with different requirements.

- The first type is a development in which at least eighty percent (80%) of the units must be occupied by at least one person 55 years of age or older. This type of development must allow at least 20% of the units to be non-restricted. This would raise the possibility that school-aged children could live there.
- The second age-restricted development is a community where all of the units are solely occupied by persons 62 years of age and older. An ordinance allowing this type of development would not allow school-aged children.

Rye does already have a "senior abatement" program on its books to allow senior residents a tax break. However, apparently a number of seniors choose not to take advantage of it. According to the Town assessor's office, there are 2550 tax cards for residential properties in town. As of 2005, there are 132 elderly exemptions associated with these taxable properties. This means only about five percent of the taxable properties have been granted this form of tax relief. This low rate of participation in the tax relief program may well indicate financial well-being among our elderly neighbors.

Next Steps

The following next steps and recommendations are designed to further Rye's effort to provide needed housing, promote community goals, improve local housing controls, and ensure compliance with relevant state and federal legislation. Every effort should be made to ensure that Rye continues to provide a range of housing opportunities for its citizens.

We will continue community discussions on the value of affordable housing for Rye; development design as a means to promote a sense of community; and areas of town suited for mixed use zoning. In so doing we will recognize how the results of past decisions have matured.

We will examine multi-family developments already in Rye to evaluate designs that were successful or inefficient. We will look into changing the zoning, where these establishments are legal but non-conforming-existing land uses, to insure them as affordable housing districts.

These may include:

- Housing adjacent to Route 1A;
- The Parsonage Apartments;
- Recent multi-family construction; and
- Restrict conversion on seasonal cottages and motels to year round developments.

The Rye Planning Board should appoint a committee to study the regional demand for affordable workforce housing. This project would be similar to the report submitted for senior RCD Housing.

We will also capitalize on the outside assistance of resources such as the Housing Partnership that has successfully created affordable housing with us and for us in the past.

We will consider other changes to our land use ordinances and regulations. Such changes may include –

- Allowing housing density tradeoffs in exchange for land conservation;
- Allowing mixed use with apartments overhead of retail establishments to reduce vehicle-dependent traffic; and
- Providing incentives to prompt developers to want to help build our vision.

The Rockingham Planning Commission is scheduled to develop a new Regional Housing Needs Assessment. This new assessment will be based upon a new methodology which, it is hoped, will more accurately and fairly evaluate individual communities need to provide affordable housing in a regional context. This Housing Chapter should be reviewed upon completion of the updated Regional Housing Needs Assessment.

CHAPTER 5 – TRANSPORTATION

Vision

We recognize that –

- Increased knowledge of the environmental consequences of how we use energy is pushing us to re-think and support other options for transportation;
- Our municipal services are mainly concentrated in the center of town while our population is largely de-centralized; and
- Significant tourist and second-home traffic will remain a seasonal challenge for residents.

Recognizing the changes in our environment, we hold the following as part of our vision for Rye's future.

- We will provide multiple safe and efficient transportation alternatives to its residents and visitors.
- Our children will increasingly walk or ride their bikes safely to school.
- Adult residents will increasingly take advantage of environmentally sound travel options such as cycling, ridesharing, and using public transportation.
- Senior and disabled residents will be enabled through expanded transportation options.

All transportation projects in Rye will be undertaken with an eye to increasing safety, protecting our natural resources, and preserving or enhancing our sense of rural character.

We will maximize the safe, efficient and effective movement of people and goods into, around and through the town, connecting with the wider transportation network.

Overview

Rye has 54 miles of streets, roads and highways. Although the growth of the region and increased use of the Seacoast is attracting increasing traffic, the network of town roads appears adequate to serve the future growth of vehicular traffic in the community without significant improvement. However, the absence of a pedestrian and bicycle network is an issue that needs to be addressed. Rye's town roads are an important component of the town's rural character and Ocean Boulevard (NH-1A) is an important part of Rye's scenic coastal character as well.

Most of Rye's main roads were laid out along the ridges surrounding the wetlands during colonial times. Most have been improved over time. They serve as both streets for the many residences located along them and highways for those passing through. The majority of the

roads in town, including the primary routes, are in good-to-fair condition with minor work required on some to fix surface cracking or other similar maintenance issues. There are a few sections that need more extensive work. Table T-1 shows maintenance responsibilities for Rye's roads and Map T-1 shows road classifications.

Table T-1 Road Maintenance Responsibilities in Rye, New Hampshire		
Roads by maintenance responsibility	Road Segment	Mileage
State-maintained primary highways	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Ocean Boulevard (NH 1A) along the coast - Lafayette Road (US 1) - a portion of Wentworth Road (NH 1B) 	11
State-maintained secondary roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Bracket Road, from Pioneer to IA - Marsh Road - small portion of Breakfast Hill Road 	3
Town-owned and maintained roads	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - most other in-town roads - New residential subdivision streets that are turned over to the Town become Class V roads once they become public 	40

The bridges in town are owned and maintained by the State. There is an ongoing project to replace to the Seavey's Creek Bridge. This project is currently undergoing engineering design and is scheduled to be constructed during Fiscal Year 2007.

1.0 TRAFFIC FLOW AND TRAVEL PATTERNS

Most trips in or out of Rye are either: coming from or going to Portsmouth; to the north; or US-1 to the west. Such trips include work, shopping and entertainment trips of most town residents as well as the bulk of seasonal traffic headed to the beaches or merely passing through on Ocean Boulevard. The orientation of Rye's principal traffic artery (i.e. Washington Road to Wallis Road to Sagamore Road) is south-to-north. Rye's natural features have limited points of access to the west to Wentworth Road, Foyes Corner, Lang Road, Washington Road at Breakfast Hill, and South Road.

The Town of Rye, the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC), the New Hampshire Department of Transportation (NHDOT), and other agencies have monitored traffic volumes over the years at many locations throughout Rye. The most recent counts from some of these locations are shown in Table T-2. The volumes are shown in Annualized Average Daily Traffic or AADT. AADT is an average daily traffic count that has been adjusted to eliminate seasonal fluctuations.

Map T-1 Road classifications

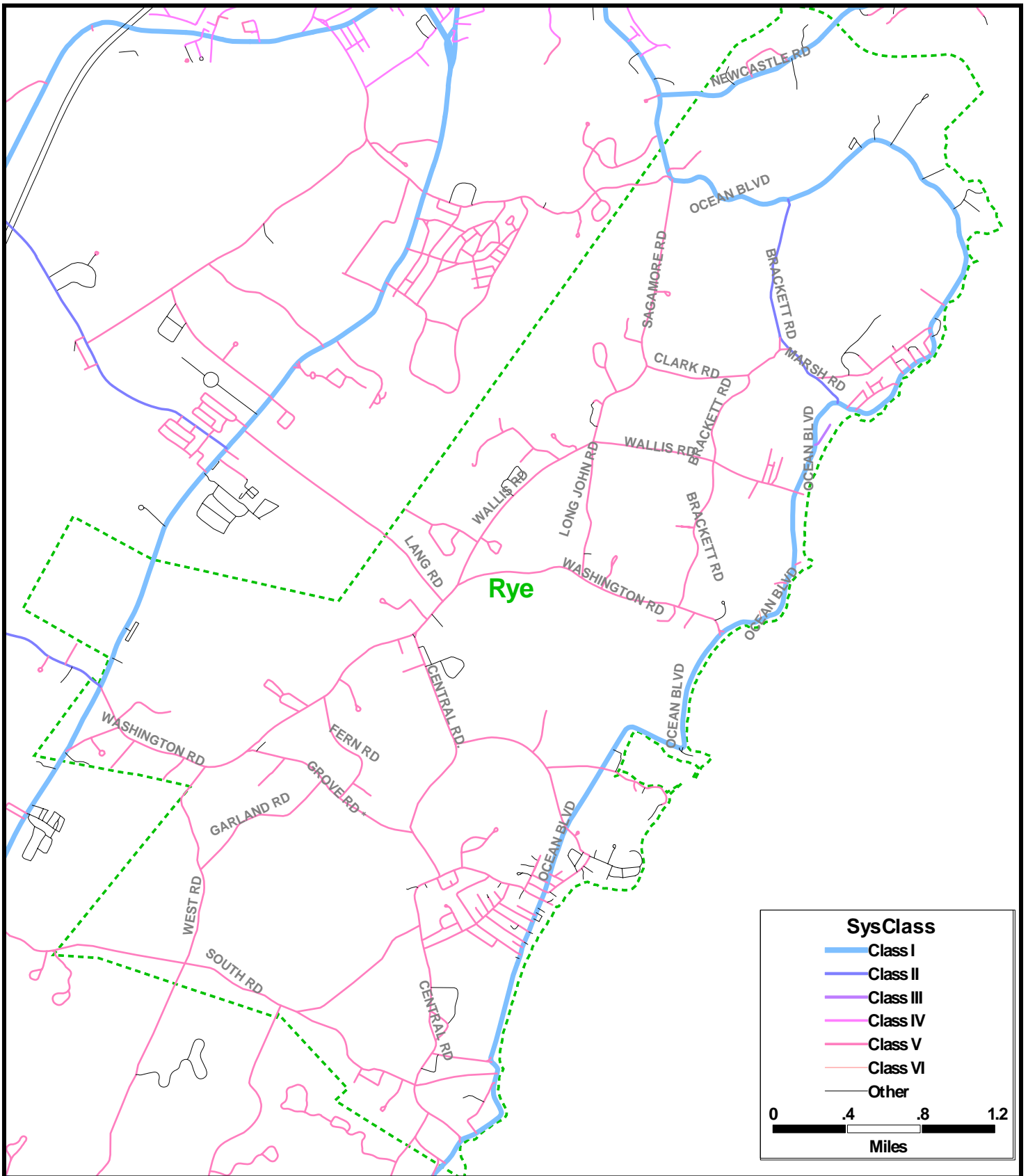


Table T-2 Annualized Average Daily Traffic for selected sites in Rye, NH			
Location	1998	2004	Annual Growth Rate
NH 1A At Portsmouth TL ¹	10000	11000	1.36%
NH 1A West of Brackett Road	7200	5600	-4.19%
NH 1A At North Hampton TL	6400	4100	-7.42%
Elwyn Road At Portsmouth TL	6400	6100	-0.80%
US 1 At Rye/Portsmouth TL ¹	160000	170000	0.87%
Lang Road At Portsmouth TL ²	3900	4800	3.46%
NH 1B At Portsmouth TL	4000	6000	6.76%
Sagamore Road Over Berry's Brook	4040	4500	1.80%

1 1997 Count Used as bas year not 1998

2 2004 Volume is an estimate based on a 2003 Turning Movement Count completed by Steve Pernaw & Associates for a Lang Road Residential Development in Portsmouth

3 Except for #2 above, all data from NH DOT Annual Traffic Reports

The roadway network in Rye is, for the most part, well within its functional capacity. Occasional congestion does occur, primarily during the summer months on the routes to and from the beaches. Two exceptions of note are: Foyes Corner: This intersection is a current safety and capacity concern. It is currently a three-way-stop controlled intersection with odd approach angles. A project has been proposed by the NH Department of Transportation to construct a proposed roundabout.

Pioneer Road (US 1A): Pioneer Road is designated as a Scenic Byway. It is controlled by the State and shoulders have been proposed on the roadway to better and more safely serve the significant bicycle traffic that frequents the area.

Infrequent and inconsistent traffic count data makes it difficult to determine the root causes of traffic volume increases; they may be attributed to several different general possibilities:

- Diversion to alternative routes due to congestion either within Rye or on roads outside of Rye. For instance, congestion in Seabrook or Hampton may cause fewer people to travel the length of Ocean Boulevard, using alternate routes such as I-95 to Ocean Road to enter Rye via Lang Road or I-95 to US-1 to enter Rye via Elwyn Road.
- Changes in where people work. During the time period covered by these traffic counts, Pease Tradeport had significant changes in employment levels as did the City of Portsmouth. People's work destinations subsequently change as well.
- Shifting travel destinations for tourists. The escalation of gas prices, for example, will impact traffic volume.
- Count discrepancies. If a traffic volume count occurred during a week where travel was higher or lower due to a non-recurring event or some other external factor, or if a counter malfunction occurred, counts would be significantly affected.

Lang Road is already carrying increasing traffic volumes as it becomes more of a primary access point between Rye and Portsmouth. Mill Road/West Road may also show increased volumes if it is used as an alternative to traveling on US-1. Some conflict has already arisen as a result of truck traffic that must travel local roads in order to access businesses in Rye and surrounding communities. However, the Rye road system would not generally be considered an efficient alternative for drivers not already destined for Rye.

To limit through truck traffic, the Town can place limits on some roadways under certain conditions as long as reasonable alternative routes exist. In order to assure that trucks use the proper roads, the town should enforce RSA 47:17, Section VIII “Traffic Devices and Signals.”

According to the 2000 Census, of 2319 employed Rye residents, nearly 25% work within the community and another 45% commute to another location within Rockingham County (primarily Portsmouth, Exeter, and North Hampton). The remaining 30% commute to other locations in New Hampshire, Maine, Massachusetts and other states.

Of the 1567 people who work in Rye, about 36% live here, while another 42% live elsewhere in Rockingham County. The majority of those commuters come from other towns and cities in the Seacoast Region. The remaining 22% of Rye’s workers come from elsewhere in New Hampshire with a only a few residing in Maine and Massachusetts.

These census figures should be viewed within the context of a dynamic region. The following describes some trends being seen within the larger Seacoast region.

Rye employment increased 2.5 percent between 1990 and 2000. It is expected to continue increasing for the foreseeable future along with the rest of the Seacoast region. This employment growth has contributed to commuters leaving jobs in Massachusetts and other states to take jobs within New Hampshire. This trend is reflected in the following statistics for the region.

- The number of Seacoast region residents who commute to work in New Hampshire and surrounding states is 121,837. The bulk of these workers commute to jobs in New Hampshire (103,911 or 85%), with most of those (82,907) working within the Seacoast Urbanized Area. Ten percent (12,404) of Seacoast commuters drive to Massachusetts. Four percent (4,489) go to Maine. Only about 1,000 residents of the region (1%) commute outside of this area.

Figures T-1

2000 Census Commuter Flows

Workers Originating in Rye

Total Workers Living in Rye	2319
Live in Rye and Work in NH	
Live and Work in Rye	569
Rest of Rock Co.	1053
Strafford Co.	147
Merrimack Co.	7
Hillsborough Co.	56
Work in MA	297
Work in Maine (York Co.)	94
Work in Other States	96

People Who Work in Rye

Work in Rye	1567
Live and Work in Rye	569
Commute from Rock. Co NH	656
Commute from Strafford Co. NH	168
Commute from rest of NH	69
Commute from Maine	87
Commute from Massachusetts	18

- Commuter trips by Region, residents grew more quickly than the population itself. Commutes increased by 11% between 1990 and 2000 whereas the population grew 8.9%. This indicates that the Region's increased population only partially accounts for increased traffic. More of the people here are commuting now.
- Commutes to New Hampshire and Massachusetts communities have increased. Commutes to Maine have decreased. The 11% increase in total commute trips is primarily found in the 15% increase in commutes to jobs in New Hampshire communities and 19% increase in commutes to Massachusetts. Commutes to Maine (36% decrease) and other states (16% decrease) declined significantly.
- Commutes to Boston and Northern Massachusetts increased significantly. Commuter trips to Boston increased (27%). Commutes to Essex County, our neighboring county just to the south of New Hampshire and one of the largest destinations outside of the state, grew 9% during the decade. Commutes to Massachusetts communities outside of Boston and Essex County increased by 37%.
- There was a significant increase in commuter trips to New Hampshire locations outside of the Seacoast UZA. This includes an increase of 127% of the towns of Salem, Plaistow and Windham and an increase of 56% outside of Rockingham and Strafford Counties. Part of this can likely be attributed to improved access being provided to Hillsborough and Merrimack Counties as a result of upgrades to NH-101.

The interrelationships between population growth, employment patterns, and land use ultimately affect transportation patterns and frequency. Dispersed housing contributes to lengthy commutes in the Seacoast Region. Consistent with national trends, vehicle miles traveled and total vehicle trips have increased at rates that are two to three times faster than either population or housing growth. The projected growth in the region, and the likelihood of continued pattern of dispersed land use, foreshadows a continued rise in the demand for travel for the foreseeable future.

The vast majority of Rye residents drive to work alone (85%), although a small percentage does carpool. Public transportation is also minimally used for commuting probably due to the fact that there is no fixed-route service with destinations in Rye. The proximity of a few Rye residents to transit stops in Portsmouth means that a few workers (0.4%) use this method for getting to work.

Only about 2% of Rye workers walk to work. No one reported bicycling.

A trend that has been showing up in many of the Seacoast communities is an increase in the number of people who work at home. In 1990, 134 Rye residents (5.8% of workers) worked in their houses. By 2000, this had increased to 239 (10.3% of workers). This trend is expected to continue with the proliferation of broadband Internet access and more flexible employers.

2.0 TRANSPORTATION OPTIONS

There are few sidewalks in Rye. However, there is a growing desire to construct a sidewalk from the Rye Jr. High School to the Library.¹

Bicycle travel in Rye is primarily recreational at this time. Rye has one paved, off-road bicycle path in the region. This path runs adjacent to NH-1A from the bridge at Berry Brook estuary south through Odiorne State Park. It rejoins the roadway just north of Wallis Sands Beach.

There is significant bicycle transportation planning going on at the state and regional levels. One of the primary goals of New Hampshire's Statewide Bicycle and Pedestrian Plan is to recognize, support and encourage bicycling and walking as alternatives to motorized forms of transportation. The State's plan includes a "Statewide Bicycle Route System" which was adopted as the most suitable network of existing roads to serve the needs of inter-regional bicycle trips. NH-1A is part of that state bicycle network.

In addition there is a regional bike network, SABRE, which compliments the state system with local roads that are considered bicycle-friendly within communities. It provides loop routes as well as connections with other towns. Rye's Washington, Mill/West, Grove, Central, Cable, Wallis and Sagamore Roads provide connections between State-identified routes NH-1A and NH-33, and established routes with lower vehicular volumes in other seacoast towns.

Driving alone is expensive. It also contributes to increased traffic congestion and air pollution. For the purpose of this document, public transportation is defined as any transportation service available to the general public, whether it is publicly or privately funded. It makes efficient use of our existing road network, carrying passengers that otherwise might be driving their own vehicles. It also offers social benefits by providing a reliable means of travel for those who are unable or otherwise choose not to drive themselves.

There is currently no year-round fixed-route transit service within the town of Rye. Portions of COAST (Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation) bus routes in Portsmouth pass within walking distance of some residential neighborhoods and could be reached by residents, if desired.

To help commuters cut costs and to reduce traffic congestion and air pollution, the NHDOT has constructed 25 park and ride lots throughout the State. The Portsmouth Park and Ride on NH-33 at I-95, Exit 3 is the State's largest facility of this type. It has a 975-car capacity and bike racks.

¹For purposes of seeking federal funding for improvements, roads are classified by functional categories. Descriptions of Rye's roads by functional class are shown and described in Appendix 1.

Part of the reason for this well-used lot's success is its relationship to the C&J Trailways and COAST bus systems. The convenience of these services allows users to link bus travel with Logan Airport, the metropolitan Boston public transportation system, and the Downeaster train, serving Exeter, Durham and Dover. On average the lot is filled to 64% capacity, a daily use of roughly 628 cars. This park and ride is well situated to serve Rye residents who commute via I-95.

NH Rideshare is a free commuter matching service provided by the NHDOT. It facilitates commuters finding alternative ways to travel to and from work. By using Geographical Computer Matching, it provides commuters with information and assistance about carpools, vanpools, buses, and trains. Residents register with the NH Rideshare Program at <http://www.nhrideshare.com>.

Rye currently has two demand-response transportation options for its elderly residents. Users may call Lamprey Health Care for transportation assistance. In addition, the local volunteer organization Rye SERVE (Serving Elder Residents through Volunteer Efforts) also provides transportation services to Rye's elderly population.

There are a number of taxi companies based in the area that provide service to Rye, most of which are listed in Table T-3. Generally these companies provide transportation as well as courier/delivery services within the Seacoast area, although some will also travel out of state. Many also provide discounted rides for senior citizens and the disabled, giving them a viable alternative form of transportation that can cater to their needs.

Table T-3 Taxi Services Available to Residents of Rye, New Hampshire

Service Name	Phone	Senior Discount?	Handicap Discount?	Airport Service?	State-to-State?	Courier Service ?	Pick up Packages ?	Pick up Prescriptions ?	Accepts City Vouchers ?
Abba Taxi	926-8294	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	777-9984	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
A-1 Taxi	427-1000	10%	10%	Yes		Yes	Yes	Yes	
Blue Star Taxi	436-2774	Yes		Yes	Yes			Yes	
Ed's Taxi	773-0070	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Exeter Taxi	778-7778							Yes	

For many, the roads of Rye are part of the rural character worthy of preservation as evidenced by the town's enactment of the scenic roads provision of RSA 231:58.

In Rye, Routes 1A and 1B together comprise one of New Hampshire's 14 Scenic and Cultural Byways. The intent of this designation is to "promote retention of rural and urban scenic byways, support the cultural, recreational and historic attributes along these byways

and expose the unique elements of the state’s beauty, culture and history” (RSA 238:19). Designation does not pre-empt local planning and zoning authority. Nor does it bind the municipality.

In 1995, the Rockingham Planning Commission (RPC) developed a Corridor Management Plan for Routes 1A and 1B. The plan established five goals for communities within the corridor:

1. Develop recommendations that enhance the livability of the corridor.
2. Ensure that the scenic and cultural qualities of the road are protected and managed appropriately in the future.
3. Protect industries which are economically very important to the area.
4. Examine existing and future traffic conditions and (develop) management options.
5. Develop recommendations that communities can implement to directly address locally and regionally identified concerns and opportunities.

The subsequent Route 1A/1B Scenic Byway Management Plan produced the relevant recommendations listed under “Next Steps” of this chapter. As the State’s Byways program is tied directly to the National Scenic Byways Program, the byways are eligible for federal funding for projects such as interpretive centers, scenic overlooks, safety improvements and marketing materials. Support and involvement from us, as well as the other byway communities, will continue to be key to successful implementation.

Next Steps

We will maximize the safe, efficient and effective movement of people and goods into, around and through town, connecting to the wider transportation network.

We will decide upon the need for a comprehensive and systematic transportation needs assessment. This should address:

- safety issues on NH 1A and other roads;
- transportation needs for our senior and disabled residents;
- the itemization of pedestrian and bicyclist needs;
- sustaining the semi-rural character of Rye’s roads with traffic calming measures;
- the identification, inventory and protection of existing scenic vistas;
- the effects of cut-through and truck traffic; and
- the demand for fixed-route public transportation stops in Rye.

We will minimize transportation changes that promote automobile usage or increased speeds. Any and all changes will be made with full consideration given to and mitigation of environmental impacts;

We will continue to encourage and support volunteer and public transportation alternatives for senior citizens and disabled residents;

We will ensure that new housing developments will be sensitive to residents' access to services;

We will pursue funding options for sidewalks that will connect the new safety building, the library, the elementary and junior high schools. One possibility to pursue is the availability of Federal Transportation Enhancement Funds;

We will pursue funding options for shoulders along route NH-1A and Pioneer Road to improve bicycle safety.

We will pursue possible changes to Rye's zoning ordinance and land use regulations as they relate to transportation. For example:

- Our consideration of adding mixed use zoning and in-town retail possibilities will help shift our mindsets by offering new opportunities for local shopping. Such changes would reduce through and out-of-town consumer traffic. This would also offer an aspect of sustainability so that Rye residents are not limited by the zoning decisions of other communities.

We will promote the implementation of context-sensitive solutions to any roadway improvements. This could include the use of access management, traffic calming, and other techniques.

We will consider Rye's options for limiting through truck traffic. This may include time-of-day, seasonal or tonnage limits.

We will prioritize the sections of older roads requiring rebuilding due to drainage needs or inadequate initial construction standards and we will continue participating in US-1 Corridor planning efforts. We will continue to look at all access roads into and out of Rye.

We will support and promote both fixed-route and demand-responsive public transportation services, as well as, support and promote the usage of both the Portsmouth Park-and-Ride facility and the NH Rideshare Program.

We will seek improved route connections to our wider regional transit networks.

We will decide upon the most timely and relevant of the transportation recommendations from the regional Route 1A/1B Scenic Byway Corridor Management Plan, and act accordingly. This will require considering the following:

- Identifying areas with severe safety problems and/or demonstrated parking shortages and develop a plan for expanding or relocating parking while minimizing impact on character area.

- All roads should have 3 foot wide paved shoulder, appropriate signage and roadway stripes designating shoulder as bike/pedestrian facility. Areas identified as heavy in pedestrian traffic should have crosswalk improvements.
- Conduct feasibility study to identify strategies for developing bike/pedestrian ways along stretches of Route 1A/1B where 4-foot shoulders are not feasible.
- Installing bike racks and benches at key points in corridor, i.e., state parks, beaches, scenic overlooks, etc.
- Exploring the possibility of developing and printing a Seacoast bicycle map, to tie into any future statewide bicycle map and also show walking trails.
- Install signs, sheltered waiting areas and benches at key stops along existing transit routes (Pursue private and/or federal transportation funds).
- Utilize existing publicly-owned parking areas (i.e. schools, municipal lots) and pursue the cooperation of private sector in allowing a portion of their parking lot to be used for seasonal Park & Ride or stop for trolley service. Identify potential funding sources.

CHAPTER 6 – NATURAL RESOURCES

Introduction

Natural resources impact development in many ways. Resources such as wetlands, forests and shorelines place limitations on development. Similarly, development impacts natural resources. Development can affect the quantity and quality of drinking water, the condition of soils, and the wellbeing of wildlife and plant life. The balance between preserving our natural resources and developing our land is delicate and a vital function of long-range planning. The consideration of development and natural resources and the associated social and economic implications give rise to the following challenging questions:

- What are the economic, environmental and social costs and benefits of our long-term planning for growth?
- How will the town preserve its working landscape of horse farms, open areas, saltwater marshes and forests in the face of population growth and development pressures?
- How can our natural resources be utilized for recreational and educational opportunities, without degrading the very resources we seek to protect?
- How does the day-to-day work of town Boards and Commissions affect the longer-term management of our natural resources?

To discuss these questions, we need to appreciate the significant threats to natural resources, we need to evaluate the current data available, and we need to utilize the planning and legal tools available for management of natural resources.

We must also consider the views of the community, as expressed through the Master Plan Visioning Process, town surveys, and town warrant articles, as we seek to formulate goals and strategies for natural resource management. This chapter will begin with a discussion of the views expressed by the members of the community, followed by a discussion of threats to natural resources and an analysis of existing resources. We conclude with recommendations for goals and strategies for natural resource management.

Vision

The opinions expressed in the visioning sessions demonstrate that the many residents of Rye recognize the challenges they face in addressing natural resource concerns and can formulate a number of solutions to address these issues. It is clear from the visioning sessions that residents made frequent connections between our built infrastructure, (understood as buildings, roads and modes of transportation) and the natural or “green” infrastructure. Residents also made connections between the green infrastructure and the social infrastructure, or the social needs of the people, such as the need for pedestrian walkways in

some areas of town, and the relationship between the natural landscape’s scenic areas and property values in the community. Through their comments, residents identified several natural resource concerns and suggested a variety of creative solutions. Solutions include not only regulatory approaches, but also market-based and voluntary programs.

The following table summarizes the main issues raised and includes representative comments from individuals who attended the sessions.

Issue	Comments from Individuals Who Attended
1. Beaches/ waterfront	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keep beaches clean • Control dogs on the beach, ban dogs from the beach • Reclaim harbor, Jenness Beach, Wallis Sands for Rye • Encourage non-motorized craft on designated waterways and roadways, ban jet skis
2. Wastewater disposal issues	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about discharge into the ocean, silt, sewer system and fresh water management • Question capacity of existing resources to support increased population
3. Air pollution/ Noise pollution	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Concern about locally, regionally, and nationally generated pollution
4. Scenic views /Quality of life	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and enhance scenic views • Natural resources enhance quality of life • Open space creates atmosphere of small town • Cell tower effects on natural resources/aesthetics
5. Wooded lots	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purposes are viewing, noise mitigation, issue of burning wooded lots/forest management
6. Wetlands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need for stricter enforcement of wetlands regulations • Let Rye be more strict than the NHDES requirements
7. Marsh lands	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enhance the flushing of marshlands/ roads issue
8. Open space	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Open space should be visible/frontage • Consider incentives for private owners • Allow for creativity in site design/subdivision for open space • Investigate real estate transfer tax to “Rye land bank” for purchase and maintenance of open space • Consider seniors leaving their homes and selling land for development—need empty nest housing • Continue funding for open space • Restrict back lot development
9. Wildlife/ corridors/ greenbelts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain wildlife corridors to provide habitat, visual & sound barrier, and wind protection • Monitor development until wildlife corridors are clearly established and protected • Control mosquitoes • Improve pest control issues such as ticks/deer
10. Paths and sidewalks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Repair sidewalks on Cable Road. • Consider need for bikeways, bike paths • Need walkways to school, library • Prefer permeable surface paths for bikes, runners, cross-country skiing, walking. • Link the two schools with paths

Overview

1.0 SIGNIFICANT THREATS TO NATURAL RESOURCES

This section discusses fragmentation, sprawl and threats to water quality, wildlife, wildlife habitat, fisheries and the working landscape.

1.1 Fragmentation and Sprawl

Fragmentation takes places when large, contiguous parcels of undeveloped land are broken up into smaller or non-contiguous tracts of land for residential or commercial development. This happens hand-in-hand with a sprawling development pattern of conventional subdivisions: “A typical subdivision in northern New England requires 1 or 2 acre lots. Twenty houses can consume 40 acres, leaving little open space. Placing the same 20 homes on ¼ acre lots and using attractive landscaping and design elements to create privacy consumes only 5 acres, leaving room for 35 acres of open space.” (Forest Service, 2005; CEP, 2003).

Fragmentation and sprawl lead to several negative impacts on natural resources, the economy, and society. Fragmentation impacts flood retention as more impervious surfaces such as pavement are added in the course of development. Pavement cannot absorb water and thus water flows in sheets more quickly to streams, rivers, and lakes than it would over forested, wetland, or grassed landscapes which slow down water flows, act as filters and serve as water recharge areas for groundwater (Forest Service, 2005; CEP, 2003; Biodiversity Project, 2005).

Fragmentation disrupts wildlife corridors used by animals as routes to food and water, and severs connections of habitat areas (Forest Service, 2005). The Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests observes that “the state’s predicted growth of the next twenty years will fragment the large blocks of forests and wetlands that are crucial for providing wildlife habitat and sustaining critical ecological processes (SPNHF, 1999).

Economic impacts of fragmentation and sprawl include greater municipal costs for maintenance of roads, water supply, sewers, school bus routes, and fire and safety services as the population spreads out. As the community requires more services at greater cost, property taxes also rise, forcing landowners to make difficult decisions concerning future land use on their property. (Forest Service, 2005). Automobile use increases with sprawl resulting in greater fossil fuel use, increased traffic congestion, noise, and pollution when work, residences, and goods and services are all in separate locations (Putnam, 1995).

Social impacts of fragmentation and sprawl result in changes to the community. Community culture can change, particularly in small New Hampshire towns where residents once had a close connection to the land through forestry, farming, hunting and fishing, and other recreational activities. The community may suffer as a whole through the loss of recreational activities and a shared natural heritage. Residents who are more widely dispersed often have lower levels of participation in civic affairs and community volunteerism, due to less

frequent contact with neighbors and other residents, resulting in an overall loss of social capital for the town: “Each additional ten minutes in daily commuting time cuts involvement in community affairs by 10 percent” (Putnam, 1995).

Areas of Rye such as the development along Lafayette Road have fragmented habitat, reducing land area that provides food, nesting, and breeding habitat, and travel corridors for wildlife.

Fragmentation and Sprawl: Impacts	Proposed Solutions for Rye
Increases in impervious surface/ decreased flood retention/ faster delivery of pollutants to streams and wetlands	Allow narrower streets in subdivisions to reduce impervious surface. Require on-site infiltration and vegetated buffers for streams and wetlands. Require low impact development strategies for drainage plans.
Greater automobile emissions, congestion, greater infrastructure costs for isolated subdivisions at the end of long cul-de-sacs	Provide for walkable or bikeable subdivisions. Require two points of connectivity in new subdivisions to existing street networks.
Fragmentation of forests restrictive to species range requirements	Require contiguous areas of wetland/other habitat be designated at beginning of design phase for conservation subdivision. Require developers to protect trees from impacts of construction activities.
Roads, etc disrupt wildlife corridors	Provide tunnels, wider culverts, or other safe crossings for wildlife where roads fragment habitat

2.0 THREATS TO WATER QUALITY

2.1 Surface Water

Water resources are plentiful and diverse in Rye, but are nevertheless prone to threats from a variety of sources. Water quality is threatened by pollution from point sources (pollution from an identifiable point of discharge) such as septic systems, or run-off from parking lots and from non-point sources (pollution from an identifiable point of discharge) such as atmospheric deposition of acid rain and mercury. Waters are classified as “impaired” if they are of unsuitable quality for swimming, maintaining healthy aquatic biota, and (or) have a fish consumption advisory posted (Flanagan et al., 1998).

Threats to water quality include a number of contaminants, such as metals (including mercury), PCBs, dioxin, phosphates and nitrates from agricultural, commercial and residential use of fertilizers and pesticides and industrial waste, as well as physical and biological processes including siltation and erosion, organic enrichment resulting in low dissolved oxygen, flow alterations, and habitat alterations. According to The Department of Environmental Services (DES), metals, PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls), and bacteria are the leading threats to water quality in freshwater rivers and streams.

2.2 Mercury

Mercury is a bioaccumulative pollutant that can cause harm to plants, birds, mammals, and humans. After mercury is released into the environment, it first accumulates in the bottom sediments, then is ingested by animals and fish, and is passed up the food chain through predation. Mercury accumulates in body tissue, and is thus transmitted to humans when they consume fish. Effects of mercury exposure on humans include neurotoxicity, kidney toxicity, gastrointestinal toxicity, cardiovascular toxicity, dermal toxicity, developmental toxicity and death (DES, 2005).

2.3 Sources of Mercury

Mercury emitted into the air can travel great distances by prevailing winds. Mercury pollution remains a series threat to the region's water quality, wildlife, and to human health. Sources of mercury contamination include atmospheric deposition of mercury from coal-burning power plants, which may have originated from as far away as the Midwest. The mercury travels across land and is then washed out of the air by precipitation. In-state sources also contribute to mercury contamination. Efforts to date to reduce local contamination have included eliminating mercury in batteries, promoting recycling of mercury-wastes, and prohibiting the use of pesticides containing mercury. New Hampshire also recently participated in a regional effort to develop a Regional Mercury Action Plan through the Conference of New England Governors and Eastern Canadian Premiers. The goal of the plan is to substantially reduce mercury contamination by seeking to eliminate man-made mercury releases (DES, 2005).

2.4 Other Threats to Surface Water

In freshwater lakes and ponds, major threats include low pH values due to acid rain as well as the state's natural low alkalinity levels caused by granite bedrock. Excessive algal growth, noxious aquatic plants, and bacteria also present threats to surface water. The New England Coastal basins are underlain by large amounts of bedrock, which has little to no buffering capacity. The result is that surface waters are susceptible to acidification from atmospheric deposition, introduction of exotic species, municipal and industrial point and non-point pollution sources.

2.5 Tidal, Coastal, and Open Waters

Tidal waters, coastal shoreline waters, and open ocean waters have yet another set of contaminants which pose significant threats to water quality. PCBs, bacteria, and metals are the primary threats to estuaries; PCBs are the primary threats to coastal waters and open ocean waters. Known sources include sewer cross connections, and combined sewer overflows.

2.6 Salt Marshes

Historically, salt marshes were harvested for salt marsh hay. A healthy salt marsh appears as a flat, low meadow of dense salt tolerant grasses. Tidal flooding distributes water through a system of creeks in healthy marshes. In the state of New Hampshire, there are about 6,200 acres of salt marsh. Due to its coastal location, salt marshes are an important and prominent ecosystem in the Town of Rye. Salt marshes are highly productive ecosystems that rely on a delicate balance between marine and terrestrial environments. Marshes provide scenic views, open space and habitats for many types of wildlife including fish and birds such as snowy egrets and great blue herons. Marshes also provide water filtration and areas for flood retention and flood control (NRCS, 2005).

Threats to salt marshes include changes to natural hydrology, pollution, coastal development, fill/marsh elevations, and invasive plant species. During the early 1900s roads and railroads were constructed and severed the connection between salt marshes and the ocean, these areas were highly productive ecosystems. Parts of the marsh were no longer connected to the ocean. This division reduced or eliminated tidal flooding, which disrupted natural flooding regimes and altered soil and water chemistry, resulting in changes to natural plant and animal communities, including the introduction of invasive species such as phragmites and purple loosestrife (DES, 2004). Other threats to salt marshes include failed attempts to provide flow such as the installation of culverts, which were too small (NRCS, 2005). Mosquito control efforts have also sometimes resulted in negative impacts to salt marshes through poorly designed ditches or other attempts to drain marshes (NRCS, 2005).

Many communities now recognize these negative effects and are now working actively to restore their salt marshes. Restoration efforts are discussed at length in sections to follow and the appendix to this chapter includes a list of current salt marsh restoration projects in the region.

Threats to Water Quality: Impacts	Proposed Solutions for Rye
Nonpoint pollution adds nitrates, contaminants to surface water and wetlands	Buffer rivers, lakes, and wetlands with vegetated buffers.
Mercury contamination may have human health impacts, negative impacts to wildlife	Educate residents about fish consumption advisories and impacts of acid rain deposition, support recycling of mercury wastes, follow state plan for mercury reduction, Berry's Brook Watershed Management Plan
Lead contamination	Educate anglers about New Hampshire's prohibition lead sinkers and jigs, and safely dispose of certain lead sinkers and jigs at NH Fish and Game offices
Lawn chemicals add contaminants and nitrates to wetlands through runoff	Consider restrictions on pesticide/fertilizer use in new subdivisions that abut wetlands

2.7 Groundwater

Contaminants in groundwater pose a number of human health concerns. Chronic bioaccumulation of toxins impair drinking water and affect wildlife species by degrading the overall water quality required for ecosystem function. Increased turbidity in freshwater streams for example results from erosion and has a negative impact on aquatic life. Fish and shellfish contamination not only affects human health, but also have an economic impact on the fisheries economy and travel and tourism industry.

New Hampshire groundwater quality is threatened by both naturally occurring contaminants such as fluoride, arsenic, mineral radioactivity and radon gas, and contamination from releases of petroleum and volatile organic compounds (VOCs) from commercial and industrial activities. VOCs and other petroleum related substances are the most frequently detected substances. The sources of these petroleum related contaminants are petroleum storage tanks, accidental spills of petroleum, and the land disposal of wastes (NHDES 1996). Recently MtBE, a gasoline additive, has been detected in public and private wells in New Hampshire.

Radon in groundwater is prevalent in the Northeastern United States and New England to a greater extent than is found in other parts of the country (Zapecza and Szabo, 1988). NHDES estimates that up to 5 percent of the bedrock wells in New Hampshire have significant concentrations of radionuclides such as uranium, radium-222, and radium-228. Sodium due to road salt usage is also a contaminant of concern. According to one study, “contamination from road-salt storage piles and facilities and spreading of salts on roadways was the cause of 79 percent of the contaminated wells in New Hampshire” (Morrissey, 1998).

Threats to Groundwater	Proposed Solutions for Rye
Petroleum related contaminants, snow removal chemicals such as road salt, accidental spills of chemicals related to industrial uses	Develop an Aquifer Protection Ordinance restricting certain uses in the Aquifer Protection Zone and requiring appropriate practices for handling and storing waste and snow removal chemicals. Follow recommendations of Berry's Brook Watershed Management Plan.

2.8 Increases in Impervious Surface and Water Quality

Impervious surfaces impede the infiltration of water into the soil. Examples of impervious surfaces include roads, parking lots, buildings, concrete and severely compacted soils. Such surfaces are also sometimes referred to as impermeable (New Hampshire Estuaries Project, 2004).

The increase of impervious surfaces through development affects water resources in several ways. Impervious surfaces combined with urban drainage systems such as curbs and gutters and storm drain pipes can alter the natural hydrology in a watershed by increasing the

volume of stormwater and reducing groundwater recharge. Impervious surfaces can also result in loss of aquatic habitat, loss of biological diversity, and an overall decrease in water quality due to the accelerated delivery of pollutants into rivers, lakes, and estuaries (NHEP, 2004).

Recently, scientists have reported that levels of impervious surface in excess of ten percent in a watershed can affect water quality. “When the percentage of impermeable surfaces in a watershed is ten percent or less, streams typically retain good water quality and stable channels. When the proportion is between ten to twenty-five percent, stream fed flows cause noticeable erosion” (Perkins, 2004). More than twenty-five percent impermeable surface can lead to severe physical and ecological damage to streams in a watershed (Perkins, 2004).

Pollutants in runoff include suspended carcinogens known as polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, which can leach from asphalt-based and coal tar-based sealants. Other pollutants often found in runoff include pesticides, nitrates, phosphates, and salt for de-icing roads (Perkins, 2004).

Increases in impervious surface may result in less infiltration of rainwater into the soil, increasing flooding, streambed erosion, and sedimentation (DESFS, 2004). Runoff may also change the temperature of bodies of water as it may be warmer, and may contain pollutants including household chemicals, metals, fertilizers, pesticides, oil and grease, and pathogens. Loss of vegetation buffers due to development or erosion can also alter the temperature of water bodies to a level at which species cannot persist (DEFS, 2004), (*DES fast sheet)

Impervious surfaces represent a threat not only to the green infrastructure of streams and water recharge areas, but also to the social and built infrastructure components of municipal services. In other words, reducing impervious surface not only helps to improve water quality, it may also result in lower municipal costs for road maintenance and clearing and lower development costs. A 100-foot reduction in road length will result in a savings of about \$15,000. This figure includes savings from reduced pavement, curb and gutter, and stormwater management structures (Center for Watershed Protection, 1998). Well-planned street layouts will reduce impervious surface and help alleviate traffic congestion. The goal is to protect conservation areas, and create a street system that optimizes the ability of town fire and rescue officials to respond to emergencies in a timely and efficient fashion.

Threats from Impervious Surfaces	Proposed Solutions for Rye
Flooding, reduced suitability of land for water recharge	Conduct a review of Rye's ordinances and regulations based on Better Site Design checklist. Require on-site infiltration.
Delivery of pollutants to water bodies, wetlands, traveling across paved areas	Buffer water bodies, reduce amounts of impervious surface through use of narrower roads in subdivisions.
Increased municipal costs, poorly designed road networks that result in congestion and higher municipal costs	Limit lengths of cul-de sacs, roads in new subdivisions. Restrict development to areas adjacent to existing development.

3.0 THREATS TO WILDLIFE

Fragmentation and habitat loss threaten the continued viability of wildlife. When landscapes are fragmented by development, species requiring large ranges for basic survival and reproduction needs are threatened. When a habitat is separated by great distances, the ability of a species to reproduce and withstand stress is diminished. Fragmentation thus may lead to a decline in species population as well as an increase in human/wildlife conflicts as former habitat is replaced by development.

Development may also increase edge effects, which are defined as “changes in environmental conditions and animal behavior and well-being that result from being in close proximity to the border between habitat areas.”

3.1 Nuisance Wild Animals

In some situations development encroaches upon previously undeveloped wildlife habitat, wild animals may persist in the area and be considered a nuisance to new residents, and may forage on landscaping, despoil lawns or recreation areas, or threaten family pets. Rye has a particularly high deer population, as shown by the 2004 Analysis of Annual Deer Mortality Data. Towns with the highest deer kill per square mile were South Hampton (6.5 deer per square mile) and Rye (5.94 deer per square mile). Animals such as coyotes and fishers may sometimes prey on family pets. Towns such as Rye may wish to consider additional measures to manage the populations of potential nuisance animals, and educate landowners about wildlife that may be in the area.

3.2 Human Activity

Everyday activities associated with development can have negative effects on wildlife. Lighting can affect the behavior and biological rhythms of species that are guided by cycles of light and dark. Domestic pets such as cats may become predators to ground-nesting birds. Household trash may attract certain species and allow them to thrive (DESFS, 2004) and may create nuisance conditions or human/wildlife conflicts.

Threats to Wildlife	Proposed Solutions for Rye
Fragmentation of habitat	Protect green corridors through purchase of fee title or easements, follow State Wildlife Conservation Plan and mapping to designate protected areas
Lighting	Require dark-sky standards for new developments or site plans, fully shield or full cutoff fixtures.
Private landowner education	Educate landowners about pet predation, disposal of household trash, and household lighting. Educate landowners about voluntary federal incentive programs to protect habitat on private land

Invasive species	Monitor invasive species in new development and near critical areas such as wetlands, salt marshes, remove invaders such as Phragmites to slow proliferation. Educate boaters on removing aquatic species from boat hulls.
Nuisance wild animals: geese, coyotes, deer	Educate landowners about nuisance animals through Fish and Game resources. Consider possible options for control of animals. Learn seasonal hunting options and restrictions. Coyotes have no closed season and can be hunted at night during certain times of the year.

3.4 Biodiversity

Wildlife losses can be measured not only in terms of individual species, but also in terms of an overall loss in biodiversity. Biodiversity is critical to ecosystem function, or green infrastructure, due to the interdependent relationships between animal and plant species. Biodiversity is also important to sustaining the built and social infrastructures, due to the importance of ecosystem function to science, economics, energy, and health.

With increased development pressures, the environmental, economic, and social utility provided by New Hampshire's water resources, wetlands, forests, fields, and wildlife is severely compromised. Although ecosystems are made up of dynamic, adaptive processes that can respond to many stressors, the recent impacts of growth and the loss of important resources has resulted in the loss of species and the degradation and loss of water resources, forests, wetlands, salt marshland, and farmlands.

The Town may wish to utilize new information available from the state Fish and Game Department concerning the state wildlife habitat protection plan. This plan will contain individual information for each town in the state on wildlife habitat as well as mapping of wildlife habitat areas. The Town could use this mapping to develop plans for management of town own lands and to identify areas in the town worthy of protection. The maps included in the state plan will be helpful in this regard. The Wildlife Habitat Map, included as part of the map set with this chapter, shows 10 different types of areas of habitat types important for a particular species. The list of species for each type is included in the appendix with this map.

The Wildlife Habitat Co-Occurrence Map gives a score based on the number of habitat types which occur in a particular area, and a second score based on the fragmentation of the area referred to as the unfragmented habitat block score. Larger areas of unfragmented habitat are potentially more valuable because they can support a wider range of species, including those that require more range in order to forage or hunt.

If the Town decides to utilize these maps, several useful resources are available to help identify areas of wildlife habitat as well as to document the occurrence of species. One particularly helpful resource is the guide "Identifying and Protecting New Hampshire's Significant Wildlife Habitat," (2001) which is available online but also is included with the initial data and maps distributed to every town from the state Fish and Game Department.

4.0 THREATS TO THE WORKING LANDSCAPE

Many important environmental services are provided by the working landscape, including water filtration by wetlands and marshlands, flood control, water recharge areas, wildlife habitat, improved air quality, erosion and sediment loss control, and moderation of climate change, as large fields and forests serve as carbon sinks, where carbon is sequestered. Rye has a long history and cultural tradition of stewardship of the working landscape. In order to sustain the many economic, cultural, and environmental benefits of the working landscape, citizens, planners, and developers must work together to ensure that growth is planned so as to minimize the detrimental effects of development on the working landscape, to protect the many economic, environmental, and social benefits the working landscape provides.

Threats to the Working Landscape	Proposed Solutions for Rye
Loss of farming, fishing and hunting as part of regional character and traditional ways of life. Loss of important environmental services such as water filtration, erosion control, and moderation of climate change.	Protect areas used as hunting grounds, scenic viewsheds, and farms from development through restrictive zoning, cooperative farms, or outright purchase. Encourage outdoor recreation on Rye public lands and on privately owned parcels with legal access. Educate private landowners on practices to protect waterways and provide wildlife habitat.

5.0 NATURAL CONDITIONS AFFECTING DEVELOPMENT

5.1 Topography

Rye's land is gently sloping and ranges in elevation from sea level to approximately 150 feet in elevation at Breakfast Hill in the southwest corner of the town. The town is traversed from northeast to southwest by a low ridge, and five smaller ridges run from the diagonal ridge eastward to the ocean. In between the ridges are tidal and freshwater marshes, thus the roadway development in the town have followed the ridge lines. The predominant slope category in Rye is 3 to 8 percent, and in general, topography per se, does not constrain the overall development of the town.

5.2 Geology and Soils

The major conditions which limit development are:

1. Tidal marshes.
2. Freshwater wetlands consisting of Whitman very stony loam and muck occupying lowlands and having a seasonal high water table at or near the surface.
3. Shallow-to-bedrock soils of the Hollis-Charlton type, which are primarily found in the northern and southwestern portions of Rye.
4. Sutton very stony loams having a seasonal high water table one to four feet from the surface, which are found in transition areas between the ridge lines and the lowlands. (Water Quality Management Report, hereinafter WQMR).

Most of the land areas of the town are not served by sewers and must, therefore, rely on on-site waste disposal systems for disposal of sanitary waste. Based on waste disposal considerations, the WQMP placed the soils of Rye into three development capability classifications: (1) soils suitable for development; (2) soils marginally suitable for development; and (3) soils not suited for development. The tidal and freshwater wetlands fall into the latter classification, as do the Hollis-Charlton soils located in areas which abut Wetlands. Other areas of the Hollis-Charlton type and the Sutton type are classified as marginally suited for development. The soils suitable for development exist in relatively narrow bands along the ridges occupied by Washington Road, Wallis Road, Central Road, Locke Road, Grove Road, Cable Road and South Road.

The Town of Rye has recognized the limitations of its soils in its Zoning Ordinance, Building Code, and Land Development Regulations. The Rye Zoning Ordinance establishes a Wetlands Conservation District which essentially prohibits building construction in the tidal marshes, freshwater marshes, streams and ponds and soils defined as poorly or very poorly drained. The zoning ordinance also includes a Wetlands Buffer regulation, which provides further protection of wetlands by prohibiting most uses of land within 100 feet of tidal marshes, freshwater marshes, ponds, and perennial streams.

Rye's Land Development Regulations and the Building Code require that all septic systems receive the approval of the New Hampshire Water Supply and Pollution Control Division. Special criteria related to the depth to bedrock, seasonal high water table, land slope and soil percolation rate are also incorporated into the land development and building regulations. Additionally, The Land Development Regulations include provisions for high intensity soils mapping standards.

Impact of Septic System Expansion on Natural Drainage

The negative environmental impact on natural drainage caused by septic system expansion/replacement in areas of shallow to bedrock soil is an increasing problem in the town. The mounding of the soil over the septic designs causes excessive runoff to the adjacent roads, wetlands, and properties. Often, these septic systems are surrounded by lawn irrigation systems adding chemical deposits to the runoff. The lawn chemical runoff poses a threat to natural habitats and wildlife. There are several examples of this problem in the Fairhill Estate section of Rye. In fact, this has caused drainage problems adjacent to these “mounded” septic systems during particularly wet periods.

Potential solutions to this situation have prompted the town to design complex drainage systems including catch basins. The cleaning of the catch basins has become a time consuming and costly burden to the town.

A better approach might be to include site-specific natural drainage planning when septic approvals are considered. This proactive approach could consider landscaping requirements using swales, rocks, shrubs, to allow lot specific drainage, and, therefore avoiding interrupting old natural drainage patterns. This approach would proactively prevent standing water on the roads, which leads to pavement deterioration.

It should also be noted that in the fragile ecological environment of highly developed areas in Rye, blasting for further development should be carefully reviewed and quite possibly prohibited. Such blasting interrupts the water table creating even more complicated drainage issues.

Paula D. Mahoney, Member of Rye Conservation Commission

5.3 Hydrology

Rye is part of two major drainage basins, the Piscataqua River Basin and the Coastal Basin. The ridge which traverses Rye diagonally from Little Harbor to Breakfast Hill forms the divide between the two basins. Within these two basins are six smaller drainage basins. Information about the groundwater basins in Rye has been enhanced by the Fracture Trace Analysis done by the Rye Water District. Groundwater basins are interconnected by rock fractures so that water is exchanged freely. The primary relationship between hydrology and development concerns water quality. Although past surface water quality testing in Rye’s drainage basin in the 1978 – 1980 period indicated that man-made pollution was not degrading water quality, management of surface runoff remains of serious concern, as evidenced by more recent data indicating that, for several years, shellfish beds have been periodically closed by the State due to contamination.

There is one large area of stratified drift aquifer in Rye, which contains several smaller areas of varying transmissivity, as shown on the Stratified Drift Aquifers Map. Transmissivity is a measure that quantifies the ability of an aquifer to transmit water, measured in feet squared per day. The large aquifer area can be found in the southwest corner of town, overlapping the border with Greenland and North Hampton. The greatest transmissivity of this aquifer area is found in two areas, one of which generally is found beneath the land area along Washington Road to the intersection of West Road. The other area is near the intersection of Washington Road and Grove Road, to Garland Road. The Town of Rye may wish to consider reviewing its site plan and subdivision regulations concerning land use in these areas, and develop an Aquifer Protection Ordinance, as state law allows towns to protect areas with unique environmental characteristics under RSA 674:21.I.(j).

Additional information concerning the hydrology of the area is expected to be forthcoming in the joint study of the NH Geological Service and DES. This study is currently examining water usage in the Seacoast Region as well as water supply areas.

5.4 Floodplains

The floodplains of Rye have been mapped by the National Flood Insurance Program on Flood Insurance Rate Maps (FIRM). The FIRMs were recently updated and approved in spring of 2005. All towns participating in the flood insurance program must reference the updated maps in their zoning ordinance. The FIRMs delineate the 100-year flood hazard areas in Rye and designate three major types of flood hazard areas:

Zone A2: Areas of 100-year flood.

Zone AO: Areas of 100 year shallow flooding.

Zone V: Areas of 100-year coastal flood with velocity (wave action).

With the exception of Locke's Neck, the area protected by the Wallis Sands seawall, Fairhill Manor and parts of Odiorne Point, most of Rye's developed coastline (including approximately half of the densely developed Jenness Beach area) is located in Flood Hazard Zones V, A2, or AO. Inland, Flood Hazard Zone A2 extends to the borders of all of Rye's salt marshes, Witch Creek, most of Berry's Brook and all three of the major ponds.

Inland, the undeveloped land in Rye that is in the 100-year flood zones depicted by the FIRM is land that is also classified as wetlands and thereby precluded from development by the Wetlands Conservation District. However, along the coast, sizable portions of the flood hazard zones are developed. The requirements of the Flood Insurance Program, which are effected through the Town of Rye's Floodplain Development and Building Ordinance, require that new or substantially improved residential construction have the first floor located above the base flood elevation and that new or substantially improved nonresidential

structures located below the base flood elevation be flood proofed. Further flood plain regulation is imposed by the New Hampshire Water Pollution Supply and Pollution Control Division of the Department of Environmental Services further regulates the flood plain: NHDES will not approve a new on-site septic system located in a 50-year floodplain.

5.5 Open Space Protection

The Conservation Commission has made significant progress in buying land or purchasing conservation easements for conservation and open space protection over the last several years by utilizing a combination of funding sources. The primary source is the 5 million dollar bond approved by Rye's voters in 2003 to acquire land for conservation. The Conservation Commission also actively seeks out additional funding through state and federal grant programs as well as donations, gifts, and agreements with developers. For example, 100 acres of land was agreed to be set aside for conservation in the new White Horse development, according to Conservation Commission Chair, Jim Raynes. Currently the Conservation Commission is working to update its maps of conservation lands.

Open Space Protection **(From the Conservation Commission's Report, Rye Annual Report, 2004)**

Since the passage of the Open Space bond in 2003, the Open Space Committee, a subcommittee of the Conservation Commission, has met with eighteen property owners to consider 200 acres for conservation. As of July 2005, eight parcels of land have been finalized under the Open Space Initiative, totaling over 130 acres. Protecting this acreage from the encroachment of development helps to ensure that Rye will maintain its semi-rural character for future generations.

The Commission, often assisted by local and/or state agencies, continues to monitor properties with site walks and to investigate violations of wetland buffer restrictions. The BOA supported one violation after the fact, holding that proper permitting is absolutely necessary within Rye.

The Commission and its Open Space sub-committee welcome input from any Rye citizen. The town's people have demonstrated steadfast interest in the goals of land and wetland conservation by supporting our work.

James S. Raynes, Chairman

To date, the Committee has met with 21 landowners to consider incorporating their land into the Open Space Plan. Using a detailed selection process, nine parcels have been selected so far. The committee has worked to place 70 acres of land from these nine parcels in conservation through private conservation easements, and 65 acres through public conservation easements. In addition, the Town of Rye additionally owns over 600 acres that have been purchased or otherwise acquired prior to the creation of the Open Space initiative. The committee is working on developing a map and narrative of all public lands that will include the following attributes: location, size, and character, history and previous owner, access points and routes, and activities allowed or disallowed on the land.

In addition to the work of acquiring land or easements and categorizing the access and uses of such land, many volunteers as well as state and local conservation groups have worked to identify wildlife species on public land. The recent Biathlon crossed public land on White Horse Farm.

6.0 UNIQUE COASTAL RESOURCES

6.1 Beaches and Dunes

Rye has six beaches and sand dune areas totaling 87 acres: Wallis Sands (partially state owned, partially town owned) Foss Beach, Jenness Beach (partially state owned, partially town owned), Cable Road, Sawyer's Beach, and Bass Beach. The dunes areas have been developed for many years, but the beaches appear to be well protected from development by the town's floodplain and wetland regulations and by the NH Wetlands Board.

6.2 Rocky Shore Areas

The New Hampshire Coastal Zone Program has identified the following areas in Rye that meet the definition of rocky shores: "Shore formation of a rock substrate which are sprayed, washed, or submerged by tidal waters extending seaward to a depth of 60 feet, including but not limited to a headland, rocky ledge, and outcropping, or glacial erratic."

The areas, from north to south are:

- Adjacent to and east of Wentworth Road north of Sheafes Point
- Sheafes Point
- Adjacent to and on either side of Frost Point (Fort Dearborn)
- Odiorne Point
- Odiorne Point south to Wallis Sands State Beach
- Concord Point
- Rye North Beach (Sandy Beach)
- Little Neck (Varrells Point)
- Locke's Neck (Straw's Point)
- Sawyer's Beach (and south to the North Hampton town line)

6.2.1 Odiorne Point

Odiorne Point State Park stretches across 330 acres of coastal land and water along Route 1A. The Park includes walking trails, boat launch areas, picnic areas, and the Seacoast Science Center. Wildlife habitat at the park includes salt water marshes, rocky shores, upland shrub forest, meadows, salt and fresh water ponds, and beach dunes. In addition to its natural amenities, the park also contains historical and cultural resources, such as the remnants of World War II military structures, cellar holes, and stone walls. The Park is operated by The Division of Parks and Recreation, with the exception of the Seacoast Science Center, which is a public/private partnership managed by the Audubon Society under contract with DPR

in affiliation with the Friends of Odiorne Point State Park and the Seacoast Science Center, Inc., and the University of New Hampshire Sea Grant Program. These groups are each represented on the Seacoast Center Advisory Committee, which is responsible for overseeing the activities of the Center.

The Science Center is host to over 100,000 visitors a year as well as school groups and day campers. The Center's activities include educational programs, field and interpretive programs.

In addition to its ownership and management of the coastal areas of the Park, The Division of Parks and Recreation also owns and manages White and Seavey Islands, which are two of the islands of the Isles of Shoales. Habitat restoration projects have been sponsored on the islands by Audubon and the NH Fish and Game Department.

Both the natural and cultural history of this unique area of Rye have been well documented and can serve as useful resources for the citizens of Rye in formulating strategies to restore habitat, protect natural areas, and respond to impacts to natural resources occurring as a result of residential and commercial development. More information on the wildlife habitat, natural history, and cultural history of the Park can be obtained from the Seacoast Science Center and in The Odiorne Point State Park and White Island Master Plan (1999) and the Management Plan for the Cultural Landscape Features of Odiorne State Park (2002). Several documented habitat inventories and related studies have also been conducted in the Park by university graduate students, professional consultants, and volunteer naturalists.

The Isles of Shoals islands are included in the Rye Historic District. The Rye Historic Commission is tasked with preserving the cultural, economic, social, political, and architectural history of the Rye Historic District. This multi-disciplinary approach to managing and protecting resources which are both natural and historic highlights the important connections between our green, built, and social infrastructure, as discussed in the introduction to this chapter.

6.3 Wetlands

Rye has approximately 7 miles of coastline with tidal and fresh water wetlands comprising approximately 38 percent of Rye's total land. Today, the coastline, estuaries, salt and fresh water marshes, and wetlands are protected by Federal, State, and local regulations. Protection is given to Rye's wetlands by state regulation of wetlands administered by the New Hampshire Wetlands Board, which requires that anyone planning to excavate, remove, fill, dredge or construct within a wetland obtain a permit from the Board. The Rye Conservation Commission reviews all applications for state wetlands permits. Environmental impacts are assessed for each requested permit affecting these protected areas and their associated buffer zones.

Much of the wetlands in the town of Rye is on town-owned land (i.e. Town Forest, Varrell Woods, Seavey Acres) and is preserved and made available for limited public use. Scenic hiking and walking trails are maintained with good forest management practices for healthy forest growth and wildlife habitat. Select parcels of land will continue to be acquired for conservation and public use through gifts of land and outright purchases. The objective is to provide additional protection for Rye's marshes, streams, ponds, and selected forested areas. It also provides for larger contiguous wildlife habitats. In 1996, Varrell Woods was acquired, a significant parcel adjoining Awcomin Marsh and the Town Forest.

There are 7 major systems of wetlands in Rye:

1. Berry's Brook – Bellyhack Bog
2. Witch Creek
3. Fairhill Swamp
4. Concord Point Drainage Basin
5. Awcomin Marsh
6. Rye Harbor Marsh
7. Cedar Swamp Run (aka Bailey Brook)

Of these, studies have found the Berry's Brook – Bellyhack Bog system to be the most pristine and the Concord Point Drainage Basin to be the most threatened. In 1993, the Berry's Brook Watershed Protection Council developed the Watershed Management Plan for Berry's Brook, prepared by Appledore Engineering, Inc. The Report includes an extensive inventory and analysis of watershed resources, a discussion of threats to watershed resources, a build-out analysis, and an action plan of regulatory and non-regulatory strategies. The plan rests on seven key policies to protect the watershed and its natural resources through an inter-municipal management framework.

The Conservation District of the Rye Zoning Ordinance, which was enacted in 1989, also protects wetlands. The Conservation District is a use district, which includes most of Rye's salt marshes within its boundaries. The uses permitted in the Conservation District include forestry, conservation, aquaculture, trail, nature centers, and wildlife viewing blinds. Commercial, business, industrial and residential uses are prohibited.

The recent report "Freshwater Wetland Mitigation Inventory for Nineteen Coastal Communities" included the table below for the town of Rye.

Figure NR-1

Freshwater Wetland Mitigation Inventory for Nineteen Coastal Communities,
by West Environmental and Carex Ecosystem Services, in cooperation
w/ Doucet Survey, Inc. 2003.

Site ID	Name	Location	Mitigation Proposed (Size in acres)	Site Summary (<i>note: NHNHI-New Hampshire Natural Heritage Inventory</i>)
RE2	Berry's Brook	Area west of US 1	Restoration: .5 acres / Preservation: 150 acres	Large wetland with a degraded Atlantic white cedar community. Site provides linkages to other conservation lands.
RE3	Forested Swamp	East of Brackett Rd. btwn Washington Rd and Wallis Rd.	Restoration: .5 acres Preservation: 14 acres	This wetland links the adjacent estuary with upland habitat. Much of the proposed upland buffer has been developed. An area of old cottages has been developed. An area of old cottages could be restored either as wetland or as an upland "island" habitat for wildlife value. Includes NHNHI element(s).
RE4	Unnamed brook	West of Brackett Rd between Washington Rd. and Wallis Rd.	Preservation: 30 acres	Southern side fragmented by a long driveway crossing. Tidal marsh appears more extensive than shown on NWI map. Much of the upland buffer is already developed/fragmented. Important wetland buffer, the estuary, and NHNHI element(s). Connects to conservation lands on eastern side of Brackett Rd.
RE5	Berry's Brook	East of Sagamore Rd., north of Clark Rd.	Restoration: .2 acres Preservation: 40 acres	Most of potential upland buffer along Sagamore Rd. is already developed. Highly valuable wetland includes a large area of floodplain associated with Berry's Brook and reported NHNHI element. Significant buffer area remains in eastern portion. Culvert replacement recommended to facilitate wildlife movement under Sagamore Rd.
RE6	Witch Creek	Inside New Castle Rd, Sagamore Rd., and Pioneer Rd.	Restoration: .5 acres Preservation: 15 acres	Wetlands with reported NHNHI element(s). Site is adjacent to golf course, If NHNHI elements are confirmed, there could be restoration of wetlands impacted by golf course runoff. Preservation or restoration would be difficult as the golf course would be affected.
RE8	Partially filled quarry and pond	New Castle Rd.	Restoration: 10 acres	This is a partially filled rock quarry. This potentially high value wetland links adjacent conservation lands and Sagamore Creek. Site is in an area of high development pressure adjacent to golf course and views of the estuary. Fill is old and includes some trash that may involve contamination issues. Appropriate measures may be needed to prevent Phragmites invasion.

The Town may wish to utilize this information to supplement its current work in protecting Rye's wetlands.

6.4 Areas of Scenic Importance

The state coastal program has identified seven (7) areas of coastal scenic importance in Rye. These seven areas include the Isles of Shoals, Rye Harbor, and all scenic sections of Ocean Boulevard. These areas appear protected from development which would encroach upon scenic values by local and state wetlands and floodplain regulations and by state ownership of Rye Harbor, Odiorne Point, the Ocean Boulevard right-of-way and all ledge below the mean high tide line.

6.5 Other Unusual Areas

The state coastal program has also identified eight areas in Rye that have uniqueness or character which set them apart from other categories of coastal resources. These areas are:

1. Little Harbor
2. Berry's Brook Estuary (i.e. the Berry's Brook-Bellyhack ecosystem).
3. Fairhill-White Cedar Swamp
4. Odiorne State Park
5. Eel Pond/Cedar Swamp Run
6. Burkes Pond (and Browns Mill Pond)
7. Rye Ledge
8. Isles of Shoals

These areas all appear well-protected by the state and local regulations previously described herein, except for Berry's Brook, which is a unique ecosystem threatened with development encroachment from within the Portsmouth portion of the watershed.

7.0 COASTAL WILDLIFE HABITAT AND SPECIES

Coastal species play an important role in the coastal ecosystem, provide recreational harvesting activities, and serve as an important food sources to many residents.

7.1 Shellfish

The New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (DES) Watershed Management Bureau is responsible for monitoring coastal shellfish growing waters. The shellfish program evaluates the sanitary quality of all coastal shellfish growing waters in the state and ensures that these evaluations are kept current through periodic re-evaluations. The program identifies pollution sources and other factors that may render shellfish resources unfit for human consumption. Agents in the program work with local officials, state agencies, environmental organizations, and members of the public to eliminate pollution sources and inform and educate the public about the quality of the state's shellfish resources and potential health risks associated with shellfish. The ambient monitoring program collects water samples from over 75 locations in the tidal waters of the state. The Red Tide monitoring program collects weekly samples of blue mussels from two sites during April through October to check the levels of Paralytic Shellfish Poison toxin in shellfish.

Three state agencies are responsible for the overall management of shellfish sanitation, harvesting, and resource health. DES is responsible for monitoring. Fish and Game is responsible for issuing harvesting licenses, managing resources, and enforcing the decisions of the DES to open or close a shellfish harvesting area. The Department of Health and Human Services regulates aspects of the commercial shellfish industry.

Rye Harbor is one of the locations where DES collects water quality samples for analysis. This information is used to make decisions concerning open/closed areas and to track changes in water quality over time.

7.2 Berry's Brook – Bellyhack Ecosystem

Berry's Brook has a total stream length of 6.2 miles, of which the easternmost 1.0 miles is tidal. It has a mean flow of 7.8 cubic feet per second. The Berry's Brook drainage basin is 5.9 square miles in area. Approximately 55 percent of the drainage basin is in the Town of Rye; 40 percent in the City of Portsmouth, and 5 percent at the headwaters at Breakfast Hill in the Town of Greenland. The following is excerpted from the Berry's Brook Water Quality Management Plan (WQMP), p. 28-29.

The Berry's Brook-Bellyhack Bog ecosystem is an area of great natural beauty and has prime importance as a healthy and functional wetlands system comprising upland drainage, feeder streams, an estuary and a tidal marsh. Its biological productivity is exceptionally high in abundance and diversity of plant and animal species. A study of this ecosystem offers one an education in the dynamics of the energy-food web upon which we are all dependent in the broad sense as well as in a strict sense. The latter refers to the fish and shellfish that can be caught or gathered in modest but adequate amounts for many families to enjoy. For example, seasonal smelt and flounder fishing is often excellent in the tidal area.

Berry's Brook has the only sea run brown trout population in New Hampshire. The marsh area is a haven for shore birds and waterfowl. Kingfishers, Great Blue Herons and Snowy Egrets can be frequently observed from the Brackett Road Bridge. The waters of Berry's Brook contain an abundance of aquatic vegetation that provides food and shelter to many other species and also contributes to the estuarine detrital reservoir.... This is the first step in the food chain, which ultimately provides for the fish, shellfish, birds, and mammals indigenous to this estuary, many of which are transient or seasonal (e.g. the sea run brown trout). If the primary producers in the food chain, the green photosynthetic plants of the wetlands, are destroyed or rendered unhealthy, eventually the whole system will breakdown and become more limited in productivity. One of the most tangible results of the degradation of ecosystems such as this to the ultimate consumer—humans—is that most of the shellfish and fin fish which depend wholly or in part on the estuarine-marsh system for their life cycles become increasingly scarce and costly.

In 1990, the Rye Planning Board and the Portsmouth Planning Board began an inter-municipal effort of watershed protection planning for the Berry's Brook watershed. The Berry's Brook Watershed Protection Council was organized, and grant assistance from the State coastal program was used for the preparation of eight planning base maps of the watershed. The base maps portray, respectively, the study area, zoning, wetland soils, parcel ownership, slopes, aquifers and utilities within the watershed.

In late 1992, further coastal program grant assistance was received for the preparation of a Watershed Management Plan for Berry's Brook. The Berry's Brook Watershed Management Plan was completed in June 1993. The plan report contains a detailed inventory and analysis of the watershed, a build-out analysis and an action plan for watershed management.

In 1995, with the assistance of a NH Coastal Program Grant, water quality testing was accomplished at eight locations along Berry's Brook during April and May 1995. Level of bacteria and hazardous compounds were low and did not pose any health problem. The Public Works Director maintains further testing as part of the NH DES Storm Water Phase II annual permit process.

7.3 Salt Marsh Restoration Projects

Salt marshes are the transition zone from the ocean to the land. In this zone, fresh water and salt water mix. Salt marshes are very productive ecosystems despite wide fluctuations in salinity, water flow, temperature, and oxygen levels. Plants that live in the salt marsh are salt tolerant. Salt marsh zonation results from species adapting to particular physical and chemical conditions in different areas of the marsh.

The influence of tides is crucial to the productivity of the marsh, carrying in nutrients for plant growth and carrying away some organic material. Remaining organic material accumulates and becomes peat (NES, 2004).

Due to zonation, four distinct areas of plant growth can be observed when looking out across a salt marsh: the low marsh, the high marsh, panes and pools, and the upland border.

The following salt marshes have benefited from ongoing restoration projects:

- Awcomin Salt Marsh: year of project 2001-2003
- Parson's Creek Marsh: year of project 1997-1999
- Fairhill Marsh: year of project Phase I 1997, Phase II 2004
- Massacre Marsh: year of project 2003 ongoing

8.0 FOREST LAND RESOURCES

The Town of Rye has numerous forested areas on both private and public property, including a town forest with trails as well as several wooded areas on conservation lands. New information from Changing Landscapes, the Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests (SPNHF) report, will provide updates to existing areas and acreages of forested land. Rye includes several unique forest areas, such as the forested areas at Odiorne Point, and other areas of Atlantic White Cedars, such as the Brown Mill Pond and White Cedars Preserve. Atlantic White Cedars are very slow-growing, with a life span of 100 to 300 years. The species is also considered as part of a globally rare ecosystem, found only in Maine and New Hampshire.

Readers are invited to refer to the forested areas map provided with this report. The map shows areas of hardwood, softwood, and mixed forest in the Town of Rye. The map also shows productive forest soil groups, which are useful in determining the type of timber protection for which an area is best suited. As stated earlier in this report, building the connections to develop a forested area wildlife corridor is an important goal as stated by the Rye Conservation Commission.

9.0 NON-COASTAL WILDLIFE HABITAT

The Fish and Wildlife Service’s Wildlife Habitat Conservation Plan contains town-specific data as well as strategies for protecting wildlife habitat. Readers are encouraged to refer to the wildlife maps included in this report and to frequently check the state Fish and Wildlife Service’s website for updates concerning the state plan. As stated above, the wildlife maps are included in this plan and may be useful to the Conservation Commission and Planning Board in considering additional protection based on the presence of important wildlife habitat. Initial data for Rye indicates 4263.3 unfragmented habitat areas, of which 26.4 percent are currently protected. The data sets also breakdown habitat types within the categories of Priority Wetlands, Non-forested habitats, uncommon habitats, and south facing slopes. Data from this plan provides evidence of unique environmental characteristics which could support additional regulatory measures for land use as well as provide information to landowners for voluntary protection efforts.

In addition to the Conservation Plan, the state has recently completed the Big Game Management Plan. This report is available online from Fish and Game, and describes specific levels of big game species in all of the game management unit areas in New Hampshire.

10.0 BROWNFIELDS / SITE REMEDIATION STUDIES / PROGRAMS

RSA 147-F governs the program for voluntary cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties, known as “brownfields.” Brownfields have historically been underutilized or abandoned due to developers’ and financial institutions fear of liability for existing environmental contamination caused by former site owners or operators. The abandonment of brownfields not only contributes to the blight created by vacant industrial sites, but also results in the needless development of more pristine “greenfields,” such as former farms and forest lands. Should any sites in Rye be named as a Brownfield, we will have a road map.

New Hampshire’s Brownfields Covenant Program is designed to encourage redevelopment of abandoned brownfields by limiting the liability of persons involved in the investigation, cleanup and redevelopment of contaminated properties. Eligible persons obtain a covenant not to sue from the NH Department of Justice and a certificate of completion from the NHDES when the person performs site investigations and remedial actions in accordance with DES requirements.

Updated information on areas identified as brownfields is available from NHDES. Planning board members may wish to review information currently available on parcels in Rye as well as in neighboring towns, such as North Hampton, to consider potential impacts to Rye lands.

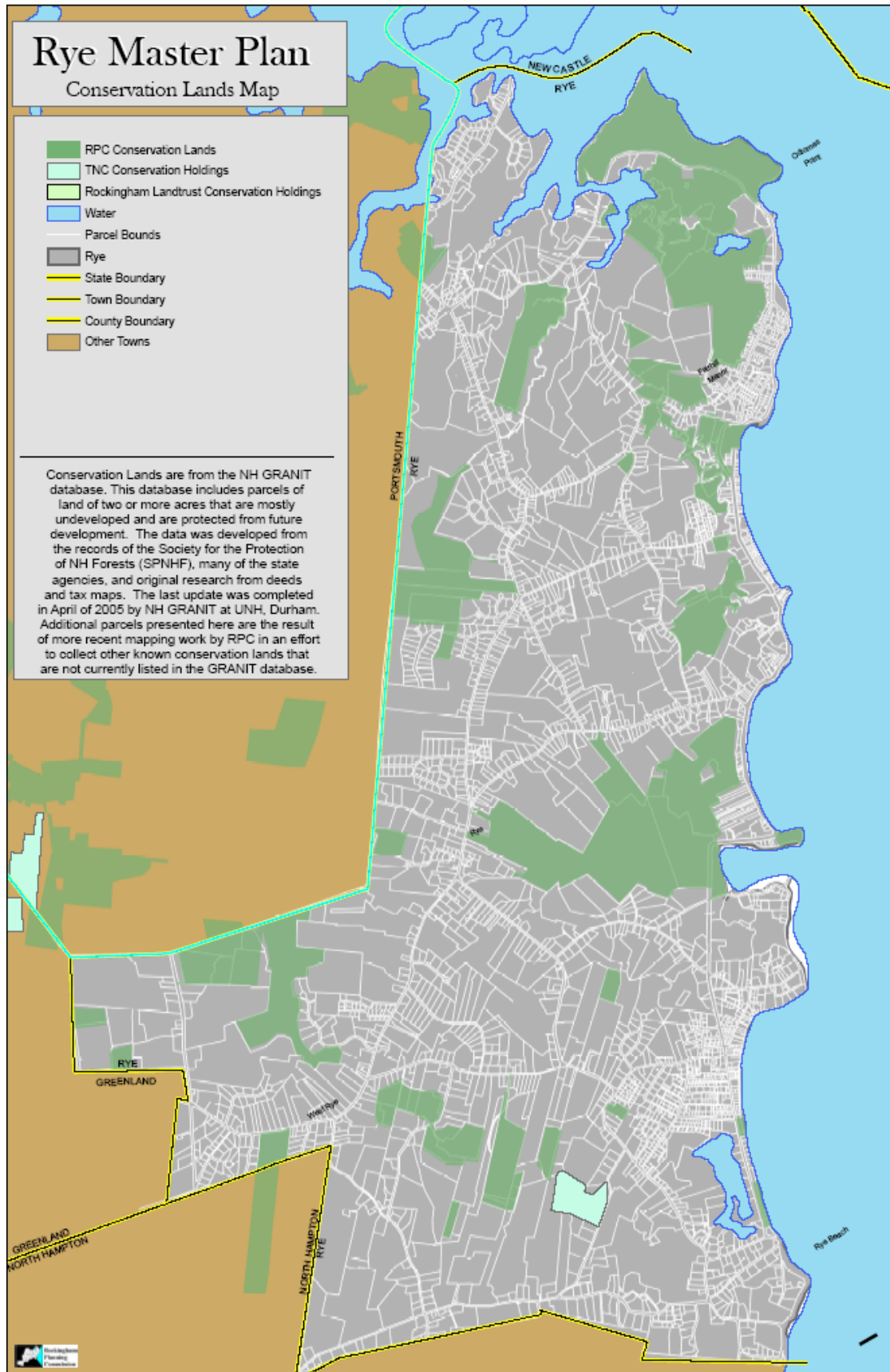
Next Steps

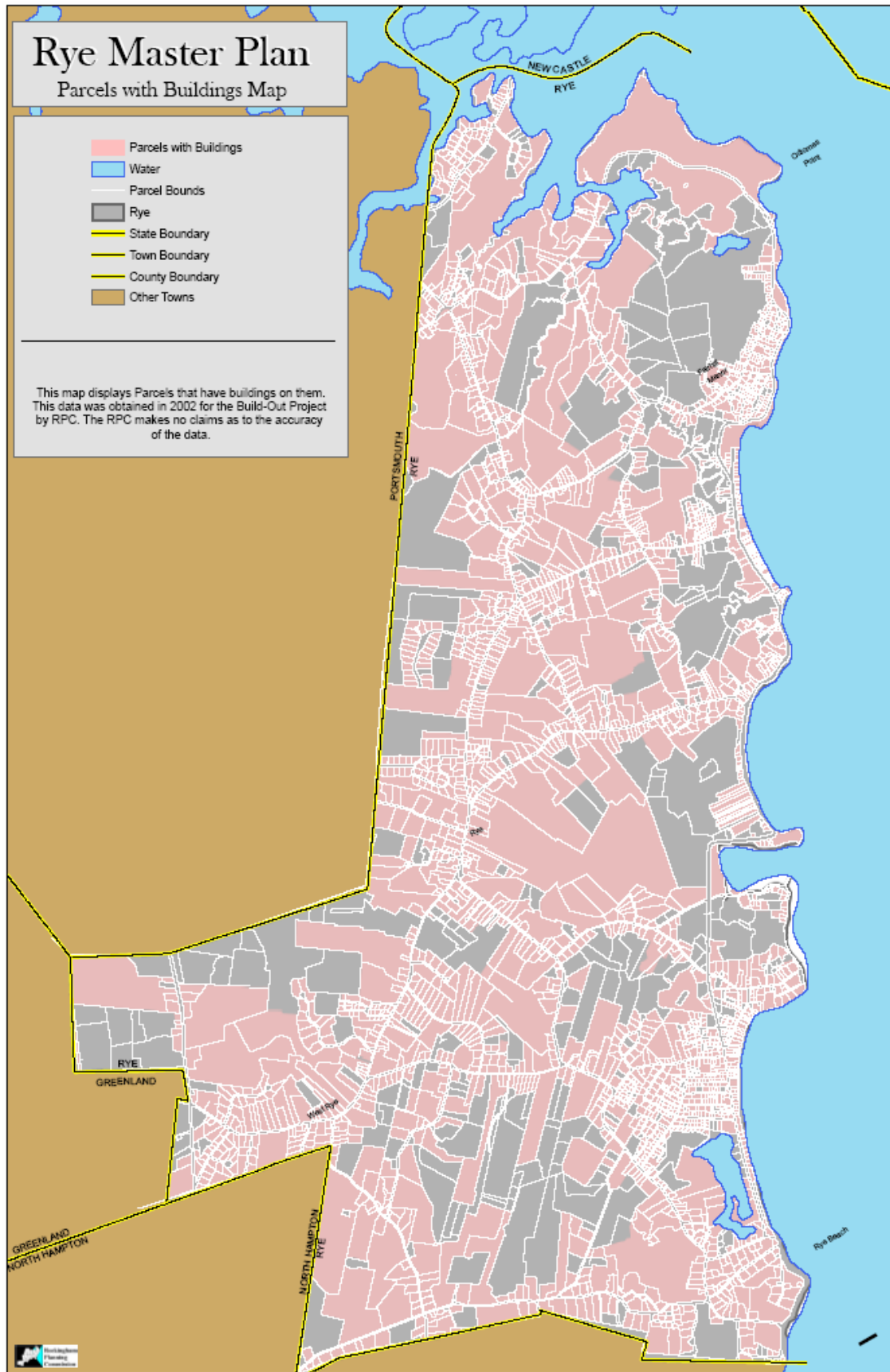
Based on the above analysis and the visioning session, the following matrix was developed. Town boards and citizens can use this matrix to develop a set of goals, strategies, and actions, which can be associated with a projected timeline for action and a core group of responsible parties: those who will lead efforts to implement specific action items.

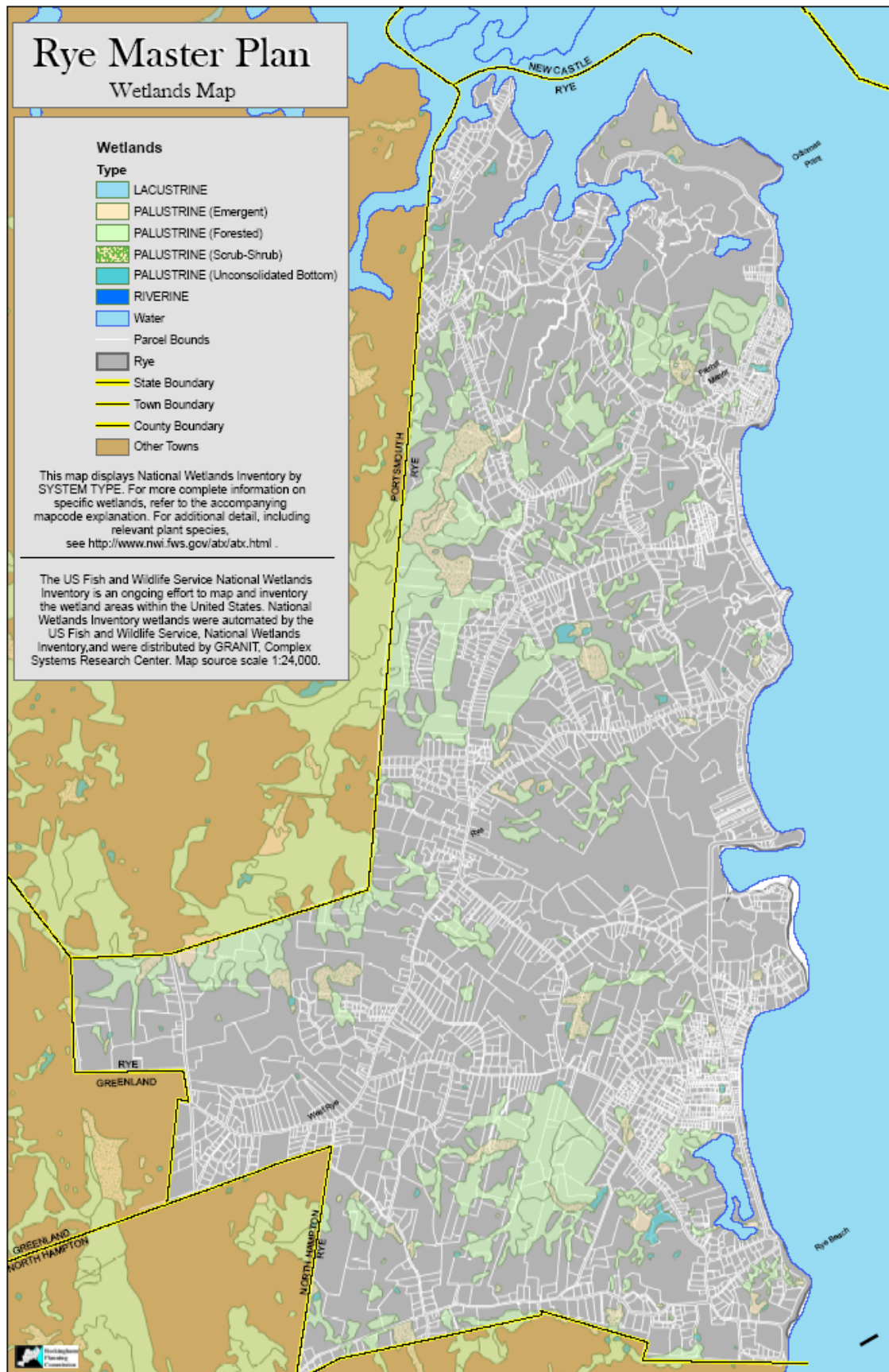
A matrix worksheet based on the comments from the visioning session and the major sections of this chapter with suggested categories is included on the following page. This matrix can serve as a guide for the town's own matrix. A number of resources are available to assist the Town in developing strategies and specific actions to achieve their chosen goals, including the Rockingham Planning Commission, UNH Cooperative Extension, and the Handbook for New Hampshire's Municipal Conservation Commissions (Swope, 2004).

Figure NR-2 Goals, Strategies and Actions

Topic/Goal	Strategy	Action Item	Timeline	Responsible Party
BEACHES: Keep beaches clean, reclaim harbors, encourage non-motorized craft on designated waterways	Adopt carry-in, carry out policies for beaches. Designate certain waterways as non-motorized	Town ordinance, signage	One year	Selectmen
WASTEWATER DISPOSAL ISSUES: Manage systems for increased population	Participate in regional studies and planning	Attend regional presentations, training	One to five year horizon	Selectmen, Planning Board, Conservation Commission
AIR POLLUTION/NOISE POLLUTION: Respond to national, regional and locally generated pollution	Encourage policies of reduce, reuse, recycle. Adopt noise ordinance testing for new site plans	Town policy and town regulation	One year	Selectmen, Planning Board
SCENIC VIEWS/QUALITY OF LIFE: Maintain and enhance scenic views and rural small town atmosphere	Identify scenic areas and scenic vistas, identify prevailing architectural styles and historic structures	Adopt viewshed protection regulations to protect rural quality. Adopt architectural standards in site plan and subdivision regs.	One year	Historic Commission, interested citizens, Conservation Commission, Planning Board
FORESTS: Manage forests for conservation and commercial use based on scientific data. Avoid fragmentation.	Use resource inventories and forest mapping and studies	Identify green corridors for protection through purchase or zoning. Protect trees from impacts of development	Ongoing	Conservation Commission, Planning Board
WETLANDS: Protect wetlands from non-point pollution.	Utilize wetland mapping and required vegetated buffers	Amend zoning ordinance to require vegetated buffers around wetlands	One year	Planning Board, Conservation Commission
MARSH LANDS: Restore marshlands and native vegetation	Restore flow, remove invasives	Continue ongoing work of Conservation Commission	Ongoing	Conservation Commission, volunteers, students
OPEN SPACE/Conservation Lands: Acquire and manage lands for conservation	Encourage landowners to donate or sell easements, encourage conservation subdivisions	Outreach to landowners by Land Trusts and Conservation Commission. Amend zoning	Ongoing	Conservation Commission, Planning Board
WILDLIFE CORRIDORS: Acquire contiguous parcels to build wildlife corridors.	Utilize fish and game mapping and data and town local knowledge	Purchase of fee title or easements, natural resources inventory	Ongoing	Conservation Commission
PATHS/SIDEWALKS: Connect areas of town for access, recreation	Seek transportation enhancement funding for small projects where appropriate	Identify appropriate areas for connections and recreation, consider funding mechanisms	Ongoing	Selectmen, Planning Board
WATER QUALITY: Utilize new and existing information on aquifers, water supply, waste discharge and water usage to plan for future land use.	Develop Aquifer protection ordinance. Educate landowners about proper chemical disposal	Follow current studies on aquifers, water demand and water flow models from USGS NH and DES	Ongoing	Planning Board, Selectmen
BROWNFIELDS: Monitor parcels in town and surrounding town to determine whether remediation should occur and land use impacts.	Follow report status of neighboring town on DES website		Ongoing	Selectmen, Conservation Commission







CHAPTER 7 – CIVIC LIFE

Vision

We recognize that working together that gives us our hometown feel. This takes many forms, such as encountering each other as we get our mail or business at Town Hall. It is expressed through our involvements in social groups; supporting our children, addressing town issues, volunteering on town boards/committees and participating in service organizations. We want to promote more of these opportunities.

We recognize that it takes the energy and idealism of our young; as well as, the experience and wisdom of our elders to get things done well; and it takes the fresh eyes of our newcomers and the histories of our long-timers to create our future.

Thus our vision of civic life in Rye includes the following:

- There will be increasing cultural and recreational opportunities for our residents to share;
- There will be larger voter turnouts;
- There will be waiting lists to serve on Town committees and commissions;
- Residents of all ages will recognize that they have roles that are important in making their town their Home; and
- Our out-of-doors will be enhanced and preserved through informed stewardship.

We want to protect, preserve, and reinforce the semi-rural character and integrity of our Town Center. Residents as well as visitors should feel a palpable identity that they are in a place that is uniquely Rye. It will be a physically welcoming part of town characterized by human-scale design and architecture reflecting our historic roots.

Overview

There are many aspects that go into creating a sense of civic life within a community. Basically, it comes down to people. It is the comings and going of the many people that live in, pass through, do business, and visit that give a town its personality. It is people that give Rye its character. Every person, in some way, makes his or her mark.

1.0 CIVIC ENGAGEMENT

Rye has experienced a spectrum of attitudes toward getting involved in local government. Residents want to maximize the extent to which its local laws, ordinances and regulations reflect their personal views and those that they hold of their community. The only means to that end is citizen involvement.

There are as many venues for getting involved as there are people. There are people in Rye making it a better place through their professions. These include our teachers and librarians, nurses and doctors, police and fire personnel, town hall and public works employees. All of our small businesses lend character.

There are numerous groups staffed by our neighbors who fill the committees that help mold this town. There are the Beach, Sewer, Historic and Mosquito Control Commissions, for example. There are the trustees for the Town's trust funds, the cemeteries and library. Rye volunteers serve all the Rye Water District, Zoning Board of Adjustment, Planning Board, Budget and Capital Improvement Project committees.

However, there are also numerous groups not formally linked to town government that help to shape the town. This includes our Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, and sports teams who make us proud. It includes all the adults who support and guide these programs. The PTA and our churches serve our families and our town. Class projects and Eagle Projects contribute.

The Town's webmaster is a volunteer. Rye SERVE (Serving Elder Residents through Volunteer Efforts), the Garden Club, the Lions Club, and Historical Society are all volunteer entities. We have people involved with groups outside of Rye that provide services to our residents. This includes people involved with Families First, Red Cross, the Seacoast Land Trust, and UNH's Marine Research Program. A partial list of known volunteer groups is listed in the Appendix. There are many less visible contributors as well. Rye is what it is because of the efforts of many people through the years. At the polls in 2006, approximately 1,407 of our registered voters turned out.

The United States has become a highly mobile society. Living for decades in one community is not the norm it once was. Census 2000 data indicated that 59% of us had lived in the same place since 1995, i.e., for the preceding 5 years. Our 2002 Town survey results for tenure are shown in Table CL-1.

Table CL-1 Residency Tenure in Rye, New Hampshire	
Years in Rye	% of respondents
1 – 2	8.46
3 – 5	14.55
6 – 10	15.57
11 – 20	20.81
21 or more	32.49
Native	8.12

Source: 2002 Rye Opinion Survey

Newcomers may not have the same level of investment in their adopted community as long-timer residents have had. The amount of time it takes for individuals to really feel ownership in the shaping of a community could be highly variable.

This does not imply that newcomers are not involved. These individuals are more likely to become involved in more “immediate” efforts. For example, adults would volunteer for groups that focus on their kids’ age groups, like sports or scouts. Individuals would join churches or conservation groups, gravitating toward established topical interests with which they are already familiar.

It is incumbent upon our well-established residents to extend their friendly, involved hands to newcomers and offer the hospitality that makes Rye “home”. Increasing participation will rely on extending invitations to contribute. Personal introductions to community participation are most effective. Through experience and by example everyone will learn they are qualified to make a difference here by virtue of their residency, intelligence and experience.

We should also foster our involvement of children and youth in town politics. These adults-in-training can learn at young ages that local politics is approachable and that their voices carry weight. One example was the recent showing of a group of Brownies before the Board of Selectmen to address safety issues surrounding a lack of sidewalks. These same scouts, their peers and classmates, can help educate adults. We are shaping their futures, after all.

The town should also recognize the implications of changes in household characteristics. The assertion that we want to encourage younger people to live here carries with it the responsibility to provide the services they seek. The availability of day care services may be an issue to be studied and addressed; as well as, adequate safe ways for walking strollers and a need for playgrounds where children live.

The 2004-2005 visioning sessions suggested further utilizing the library and the recycling center to disseminate news of interest to Rye residents. The 2002 Rye Opinion Survey found that people appreciated having their opinions solicited. When asked their preferences on how to best communicate with townspeople about Rye town business and issues, survey respondents replied as shown in Table CL-2.

Table CL-2 Suggestions for Disseminating Information about Rye, NH Town Business & Issues

Option	% of respondents endorsing this option
Posting news on Town website	60
Cable TV coverage of meetings	20
Increase frequency of Town newsletter	35
Change format of newsletter	15
Create Town hotline	20
Survey residents’ opinions more often	45
Have some town meetings during the day	15

Source: 2002 Rye Opinion Survey

In the four years since the survey was conducted, some of these recommendations have already been incorporated. Meetings are posted on the Town website, in addition to that required by State Law. The authors of the Town newsletter should be thanked for their good work. Relatively few people thought the newsletter format should be changed.

Communications with the Town is a two-way street. It is easy to understand that the distribution of 3200 surveys and assessment of 600 results is a time and energy intensive process. This work was achieved by volunteers.

Residents need to remember that surveys are not the only way to make their opinions known. There are several lines of communication already open in the form of committees, meetings and selectmen. All residents are encouraged to let their voices be heard.

2.0 TOWN CENTER

Several recommendations for Rye's Town Center came from the 2002 and the February 2005 visioning sessions. Participants embraced a vibrant center with small-scale local commerce to augment the government services already available. This vision includes increased pedestrian access and limited retail opportunities. Nobody wants to increase traffic or parking congestion, we recognize that we can plan wisely to avoid those consequences.

It is worth recognizing the priorities:

- Safe walkways within the Town Center;
- Senior housing near the Town Center;
- Protect the scale, proportion and semi-rural character that exist;
- Increase recreational opportunities for all ages; and
- Enhance the role of the library for communications on town issues.

The combination of Town Center amenities and its usage would provide opportunities for social interactions for all members of the Community. With increased resources, this will contribute to the social and economic vitality of Rye.

In achieving the desired results we will need to struggle with our resistance to change. We like our town uncluttered. We associate retail with traffic. The creation of zoning was based upon the notion that uses should be separated. Large lots were thought desirable in order to protect personal space.

We have since learned that in town, i.e., in our Town Center, it is appropriate to concentrate some residences and services both for convenience and to protect larger tracts of land away from the center. Providing housing over shops creates affordable housing. Cluster housing near services reduces traffic.

3.0 CIVIC - RECREATION

At this time, Rye's Recreation Department provides a wide range of recreational services for all ages. Strong examples are: The after-school programs young school-age children; Yoga; Pilate's and various summer camps. The first aid classes fall into this category by providing for the improved physical health and well-being of residents. There is more information from the Rye Recreation Commission in Chapter 8.

Rye's provision for sports instruction and facilities are part of an essential social and physical education vital to the community including tennis and basketball, soccer and camps.

There are many examples of the way in which the Recreation Department culturally enriches our lives. The initiative and provision of art shows, travelogues, concerts, and classes in arts and crafts stimulate the senses, contribute to the skills of our residents, and add beauty to the lives of all of us. We appreciate Webster at Rye providing forums for some of these activities.

The Recreation Department is in the process of creating a master plan to guide its future programming. Resident input is encouraged. Some ideas that were mentioned in the November 2004 visioning session included a 4-H club, a community center, and an outdoor flooded skating rink.

Many of Rye's natural resources such as beaches and woodlands provide recreational opportunities. The town forest and other conservation lands along with the \$5 million bond has allowed the Town to add many acres to its conservation holdings. Some of these lands constitute open space for individual leisure. Trails are used for walks and skiing.

According to the 2002 Rye Opinion Survey, our beaches are among the things that residents like most about Rye. We are fortunate that the beaches are a naturally occurring phenomenon. Nonetheless, active stewardship is necessary there to maximize the enjoyment for all users.

Items such as reducing pet waste, improving bicycle safety, and maintaining reasonable parking facilities are among matters that will need ongoing attention and are addressed elsewhere in this document. We thank the Beach Commission, Police Department and Department of Public Works for their active involvement in keeping our beaches such desirable destinations.

4.0 HISTORICAL RESOURCES

The Rye Historic District Commission was created by a vote of the people in 1966. It is a zoning board and its members are appointed by the Board of Selectmen. The HDC is committed to promoting preservation and maintenance of properties within the Historic

District. Any visual modifications, improvements or other changes must come before the Commission. Included in the HDC are Rye Center, from the monument to Grange Park; the 1874 Cable House, 20 Old Beach Road; the 1691 Brackett Massacre Site, 605 Brackett Road, and those islands of the Isles of Shoals annexed to Rye in 1876 (Lunging, Star and White).

The Rye Historical Society is a tax exempt organization whose membership is open to all. Founded in 1976 as an off-shoot of the Rye Bicentennial Celebration, the Historical Society owns and operates the Rye Town Museum. The Society has researched and restored old graveyards. It researches various historical topics such as old houses, compiles and maintains historical records, preserves and displays historical artifacts and presents programs of historical interest.

Specific recommendations for respecting Rye's historic resources came out of the February 2005 visioning session. The greatest concern was that the Town's Historic Resource inventory, last completed in 1983, be updated. This would include structures and landscapes.

There was a call to put Rye's Town Hall on the National Register of Historic Places. The initiative to do so, however, should not at all detract from the physical needs of that building for both safety and maintenance upgrades.

These efforts would require extensive work, and the care of the Town's historic resources is left entirely to volunteer resources. A good deal of coordinated time and energy will be required to achieve both results. The accomplishment of these efforts will require many people stepping forward to help. The Town will do well to enlist our younger residents in this work.

Several other items were mentioned for pursuit at the visioning session. These include:

- Maintaining current programs of the Historical Society including projects with third grade classes, staffing the museum and performing other outreach efforts;
- Creating a map and interpretive signs for key sites in town;
- Offering an historic homes walk-through;
- Publicizing, to a greater extent, the presence of the Isle of Shoals as a Rye asset;
- Changing the boundaries of the Historic District;
- Expanding outreach efforts to the owners of historic homes; and
- Investigating the formation of a heritage commission.

Since February 2005, the Historic Society has been exploring the creation of an historical perspective of Rye land use past, present and future. Such an exhibit would be very insightful in providing the public with visual perspectives on the changes that have shaped the face of Rye. The changes of our future would not mirror the changes of our past. However, the entire town would benefit from the efforts to publicize the need to literally look at where we're going.

Next Steps

We will foster an increasingly vibrant Town Center.

We will evaluate our Town communication methods to ensure that our local government is accessible. This will involve assessing how well information is being disseminated (website, newsletter, phone, flyers and where they are posted). It will also include ensuring that town communications are readily understandable, for example: Are the election questions clear on ballots; Can people, not experienced in running businesses, readily comprehend the Town budget?

We will encourage greater participation in the deliberative session in order for our SB 2 form of government to succeed.

We will encourage our educators to promote class projects that explore the workings of Town government. Town committees will call upon youth groups to assist in their work where possible.

We will expand our town-sponsored recreational programs without creating a financial burden on property taxes.

We will update our inventory of the Town's cultural and historical resources.

We will encourage The Historical Society with Town entities to maximize the scope and audience of a "History of Rye Town Planning" exhibit.

We will sponsor workshops on stewardship options for historical and natural resource owners.

CHAPTER 8 – MUNICIPAL SERVICES

Vision

We recognize that as a community, we have many components working together that make up our Municipal Services to the residents of Rye and the surrounding areas. They comprised of the Police, Fire Department; Police Department; Department of Public Works; Water District; Recreation and Schools.

1.0 POLICE PROTECTION – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE POLICE DEPARTMENT

The move into the new Rye Public Safety Building makes this a time of intense focus on the implementation of the plans for increased efficiency and service to our town. Being co-resident with the Rye FD is already helping with coordination of joint response to emergencies. The plan items are:

- High visibility traffic law enforcement needs to remain a top priority. Responding to the population increase of the entire Seacoast area and the increases in the number of tourists brings more traffic to the secondary roads of Rye.
- Preparation for large scale emergencies, whether natural or manmade is a priority. This preparedness will include planning, training/recruitment of personnel, and the procurement of the equipment/technologies necessary to achieve a satisfactory level of preparedness.
- Coordination between the lifeguards and the police department should be enhanced. Although the “life saving” mission does not align perfectly with the police mission, the maintenance of order on the beach dictates the inclusion in the police department. Each lifeguard station will have to be equipped with appropriate radio communication equipment.
- Optimizing deployment of all personnel to minimize overtime expense and to operate with the current staff level with no compromise in service level to our town.
- To keep pace with emerging practices and technologies will enable the Police Department to maintain a high level of service to our community. An example of this are the mobile data terminals installed in the cruisers which allow officers to transmit and receive messages including person/motor vehicle queries instantly.

Staffing is dictated by the mission and the type of town. Our Rye Police Department provides the town with around the clock coverage seven days a week with a Police Chief and 8 full-time officers and 4 part-time officers.

These uniformed personnel are supported by a full-time clerk, on-call animal control officer and an attorney serves as the department’s part time prosecutor. The department’s personnel resources are augmented by mutual aid agreements with neighboring departments. The Town contracts with the regional Emergency Response Team for tactical situations. Parking enforcement duties are handled by civilians working part time during the summer months.

There are two primary personnel management challenges. The first is to provide adequate around-the-clock coverage with existing personnel without incurring high overtime costs. Currently this is accomplished by using part time officers as the second “day car” on weekends and as replacements when available. Since only one Rye officer is on patrol during the late night shift we are totally dependant on assistance from surrounding communities when assistance is needed. The second challenge is to meet the demands created during the summer tourist season when the daily population increases drastically. This daily influx of transients creates a significant demand on resources which remain generally the same from season to season.

The Police Department is headquartered in our new Rye Public Safety Building. The Police Department is equipped with five cruisers. These vehicles are “recycled” to other departments when their five-year life as cruisers is completed, giving the town an actual vehicle life of 8 years and 150,000 miles on average. Routine maintenance and other non-warranty services are performed by the town mechanic at the Department of Public Works. (More details on service maintenance are mentioned in the DPW section of this chapter). Other equipment includes: office equipment; mobile data terminals, enforcement equipment; and communications equipment. Through grant funding the radio system has recently been converted to digital technology.

Rye makes use of the statewide E-911 facility for police, ambulance, and fire emergency reporting. The Police Department is dispatched by the Rockingham County Dispatch Center in Brentwood N.H. These services have proven to be efficient and cost-effective.

The philosophy of the Police Department is to maintain high visibility patrols accomplished through an active motor vehicle enforcement program. Approximately one third of all police activity involves motor vehicles (M/V Summons + M/V Warnings + M/V Accidents + D.W.I.s). In fact, motor vehicle stops have increased by approximately 50% from 2001 to 2004. Traffic enforcement is emphasized not only to keep our streets safe, but to provide a deterrent to more serious crimes. Studies have shown that in suburban environments: (1) the vast majority of burglaries are perpetuated using an automobile both to “case” the potential targets and to assure quick exit from the burglary scene; (2) drug dealers tend to drive to and park near where they do business; and (3) criminals strive to avoid any contact with police who may observe contraband in their vehicle or run their names through a computerized identification system. Thus, a highly visible police force makes us an unattractive target for criminals in spite of our very attractive demographics.

As in many other communities, alcohol and drugs have become the most common causes of arrests. In Rye, this probably represents a high level of interdiction from the transient population more than any extraordinary level of use within our community. The summer beach patrols (uniformed and plainclothes) have proven especially effective in controlling both drugs and alcohol along the beaches, where they are most commonly abused. Drug and alcohol arrests are followed in frequency by arrests for traffic infractions and trailed by all others.

Growth related factors affecting our police force are summer population increases, seasonal tourist influx, commercial development, coastal development policies, age composition of our citizens, and income composition of the population and spatial distribution of the population. Most people understand the high correlation between size of population and size of police force. Generally the recommended ratio of police officers is approximately 2.0 per thousand population. For smaller towns, forecasting future needs based on such formulas is not a realistic approach to determining need because both the size of the population and the force are small and because other factors have a greater impact on both actual and perceived service levels than in municipalities with larger populations. With respect to force size, the master planning perspective must be limited to observing that growth will require a larger police force at some point in the future, but probably not more than one or two officers per decade.

The workload of our current police force can be seen in Table MS-1, summary of their activities over the past 5 years.

Table MS-1 Police Force Workload

Police Activity	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006
Calls for Service	6090	7013	7659	9140	8667	8,825
Vehicle Stops	1953	2615	2042	2794	2503	1,989
Arrests	128	131	150	204	264	273
M.V. Accidents*	140	141	157	148	151	150
Alarm Responses	329	323	326	387	270	292
Suspicious Activity	267	257	293	285	311	408
Animal Control	511	430	404	475	410	455
911 Hang Ups	114	129	101	90	95	151
Medical Aid	48	319	274	273	266	294
Domestic Disputes	35	80	34	37	40	48
Residential Burglaries	18	9	1	7	7	10
Juvenile Offenses	23	20	39	24	23	31

This table does not include all activities and all categories but is meant to be representative sample of police activities.

***This category represents only those accidents which require a police investigation/report.**

Rye's land use policies could also affect the level of required police service. As noted in the Land Use Assessment, lot frontage on existing roads is nearly all "built out" today. Most of Rye's additional homes will be built in small residential subdivisions which increases the number of homes and road miles patrolled. More importantly, any change in the coastal land use policies away from the "family-oriented" concept or commercial/retail development would dramatically affect police service requirements.

FIRE PROTECTION AND EMERGENCY MEDICAL SERVICES – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE FIRE DEPARTMENT

Vision

Our Rye Fire Department delivers and will continue to deliver optimal public safety services and public education through maximum utilization of all available resources. Planning for the Fire Department's future is a process that is ever-evolving and constantly is ready to amend with the needs of this community. The plans will lay out the course for the department including recruiting and training a highly skilled and motivated diverse workforce. Items to be considered are:

- Monitoring town and area growth;
- Updating the vehicle replacement program;
- Requesting an Insurance Services Offices, Inc., (ISO) reevaluation;
- Refining the staffing plan; and
- Increasing Advanced Life Support (ALS) capabilities.

2.1 Historical Perspective

The Rye Fire Department was organized in 1947 and incorporated the Rye Beach FD to provide fire suppression services to both Rye and Rye Beach. Over the past 58 years, our department has grown to an organization of 9 career personnel, and as many as 20 paid-on-call personnel. It provides us with a full range of services – 24/7 with 2 career Fire Fighters on duty at all times. With over fifty years of services to the community, the department is steeped in a rich tradition of the fire service and dedication to the community.

Since 1992, the fire department has provided Emergency Medical Services operations with the ambulance transfer from the Rye Ambulance Corps. This was a logical extension of the fire fighters' basic mission, which is to save lives. From this beginning, our delivery of emergency medical services expanded to ALS in 1994 with the introduction of Paramedics.

2.2 Buildings and Equipment

Our Fire Department equipment functions out of one location, 555 Washington Road in Rye Center. In addition to the ambulance equipment noted above, the Town maintains a fleet of two engine trucks, one command/staff vehicle, one utility/forestry unit, and one aerial ladder truck (see complete equipment list in MS-2). This equipment supports the suppression mission and the extension of our department's mission to both emergency and non-emergency services. Emergency services include: emergency medical service, vehicle extrication, water rescue, technical rescue, hazardous materials response, and air quality identification and monitoring. The non-emergency services include: fire prevention and code enforcement, public fire and safety education, fire investigation, residential lock-out, water extrication, and any other related needs of the community as described in Table MS-3.

Table MS-2 Rye Fire Department Vehicles						
					REMAINING LIFE EXPENCTANCY	
TYPE**	MODEL	CALL SIGN	YEAR	ORIGINAL PRICE	FRONT- LINE	RESERVE (Back up)
Engine	E-One	Engine 3	2004	\$274,000	11	8
Engine	KME	Engine1	1993	\$126,000	7	12
Ladder	LTI	Ladder1	1988	\$243,000	5	0
Ambulance	Road Rescue	Ambulance 1	1999	\$93,000	1	5
Forestry/Utility	Chevrolet	Utility 1	2006	\$15,200	15	0
Command Vehicle	Ford Crown Vic	Car 1	2002	\$20,000	2	0
** - Average "Life" Per Type of Apparatus: Engine 20 Years Ladder 25 Years Ambulance 15 Years Forestry/Utility 15 Years Command Vehicle 10Years						

Source: Rye Fire Chief Rich O'Brien.

Table MS-3 Fire Department Services to the Community

Public Education <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • CPR / AED Classes • School Programs • Station Tours & Children Education • Annual Fire Prevention Open House • Speakers for Civic Organizations • Child Safety Seat Inspections 	Fire Prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plans Review • Occupancy Permit Inspections • Heating System Inspections • Flammable Materials Storage Inspections • Place of Assembly Inspections • Fire Alarm Inspections • Annual Safety Inspections • Assembly Permit Inspections • Large Event Fire Watch Programs • Emergency Pre-plan Activity
Fire Suppression <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Building Fires • Wildland / Brush Fires • Vehicle Fires • Alarm Activations 	Hazardous Materials Response <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level C Entry • Level B Entry • Carbon Monoxide Alarm Investigations • Hazard Investigations
Rescue Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vehicle Extrication • Industrial Accidents • Water Related Incidents 	Emergency Medical Responses <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Life Support • (ALS) Life Support • Event Stand-By Services
Disaster Management/Preparedness <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blizzards/Ice Storms • Floods • Hurricanes • Severe Storms/Tornadoes 	Emergency Communications <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-911 Answering Point (Concord) • ANI/ALI EMD Capabilities • Alarm Monitoring • Dispatch Capabilities (Rockingham County)
Property Damage Mitigation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cellar Water Problems • Occupant Lock-outs • Unsafe Conditions 	Fire Cause and Origin Determination <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coord. With Fire Marshall's Office • Coord. With Rye Police
Miscellaneous Services <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hanging Patriotic / Holiday Decorations • Municipal Alarm Maintenance • Crowd Management at Large Gatherings • Ambulance Hardship Program • State EMS Committees • Regional EMS Task Force Involvement • State / Seacoast Fire Chief's Association Involvement • Regional Hazardous Materials District • Highway Safety Committee 	Off-duty Citizens Assistance <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rye Fire Fighter Association Support • Smoke Detector Program

2.3 Fire Suppression—Personnel

The fire suppression schedule consists of four duty crews. Each crew is made up of one lieutenant and one firefighter. As recently as 2002, each Fire Department crew was composed of a single individual. Like most small departments, the Rye FD relies on mutual aid from neighboring towns to respond to a report of a large fire. We provide one engine with two persons, at the time of initial alarm – relying heavily on rapid response by our call and off duty firefighting force to respond from their residences or places of work.

The distribution of services provided is shown on Table MS-4. The following breakdown by National Data Classification shows the number of calls to which our fire teams responded between 2003 through 2006:

TABLE MS-4 FIRE DEPARTMENT EMERGENCY ACTIVITY				
	2003	2004	2005	2006
Medical Emergencies	369	394	367	365
Ambulance Assists	45			
Structure Fires	3	6	7	5
Chimney Fires	0	3	5	8
Outside Fires	17	23	24	31
Vehicle Fires	4	2	3	2
Motor Vehicle Crashes	34	17	23	42
Alarm Activations	74	72	74	100
Hazardous Condition Calls	7	32	33	62
Search & Rescue Calls	8	16	3	4
Odor / Smoke Investigations	18	38	33	39
Water Problems	7	16	9	156
Public Assists	34	39	40	24
Wires Down	31	6	18	41
Mutual Aid Given	6	12	13	30
Total	657	666	781	980
FIRE DEPARTMENT NON-EMERGENCY ACTIVITY – 2006				
Commercial / Residential Inspections Performed	165			
Permits Issued: Occupancy, Oil, Assembly	38			
Burning Permits Issued	876			
Child Passenger safety seat Checks / Installations	5			

2.4 Organizational Structure and Response Times:

Our organization reflects the efficient assignment of responsibility and authority. We achieve effectiveness by optimizing the distribution of workload. The lines clearly communicate accountability, coordination and supervision. Detailed job descriptions for each position ensure that each individual's specific role is clear and centered on our overall mission.

The department currently maintains collective bargaining agreements (CBA) with employees that specify the salary, benefits, and working conditions under which the employees will operate.

The National Fire Protection Association (NFPA). standards use the guideline of seven minutes to reach a fire—this time is based upon data that indicate that a structure and its contents will typically be fully in flames in this time. This time includes detection and reporting the fire, dispatch of fire equipment, travel time to the fire scene and set up time at the scene. In order to achieve the seven minute standard, travel time should be 3-4 minutes. This is possible only if a fire station is located within one and one-half to two miles from the fire site. At present approximately 60-70% of all structures in the Town are within this distance from of the fire station. Given the Town’s geography, response times to the north and south ends of the Town can exceed this standard.

2.5 Insurance Services Office Rating

Another measure to evaluate a Town’s ability to suppress fires in larger residences and commercial structures is through standards set by the Insurance Services Office, Inc. (ISO) for fire insurance rates. ISO grades fire departments looking at several factors: fire department organization, equipment, staffing, training, alarm notification, apparatus, fire station location, and water supply. In the most recent evaluation the Town improved its rating from a Class 6/9 to a Class 5/9 in July 15, 1994. Improved ratings can reward building owners with lower insurance rates.

2.6 Mutual Aid

The department currently has mutual aid agreements with all of the Seacoast communities including: Portsmouth, North Hampton, Hampton, New Castle, Greenland, Portsmouth Naval Shipyard, Kittery and York in Maine.

2.7 Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

The Fire Department supplies basic life support and ALS, depending on the medical training license level of the on-duty personnel. There are 3 paramedics (1 full-time and 2 on-call) who are cross-trained in fire, rescue and hazardous materials handling. In addition to our ambulance, two engine trucks are equipped with ALS equipment. Providing emergency medical assistance represents the highest call volume for the department, accounting for 394 calls or 60% of all responses in 2004.

At present our equipment is adequate. The fire department plan is to encourage current personnel to become Paramedic level trained and/or hire additional personnel at the Paramedic level to increase the emergency medical services capabilities. Our target is to provide ALS to every call for emergency medical care. The EMS function returns its revenues to the Town’s General Fund. In the past several years, the annual revenues have increased from \$60,000 to approximately \$80,000.

2.8 Fire and Rescue Training

The department must train its staff in routine and advanced operational procedures for fire, rescue and emergency services. Our whole team must keep up with the new and changing laws and regulations regarding training. They take advantage of off-site locations such as the NH Fire Academy in Concord. The time commitment for our personnel to attend necessary courses has increased since September 11th, 2001.

2.9 Fire Prevention and Public Safety Education

The department has an active program of fire prevention and education. We work closely with businesses to address potential fire and life safety issues and problems. We support the town's Planning and Zoning department with reviews of all new buildings to ensure compliance with the town's codes. Finally, the department has a rigorous policy to investigate all fires and identify issues that can be used in future public education programs.

The department has a proactive fire prevention program that reaches a wide range of residents from school groups to businesses to senior citizens. Programs have been developed for a variety of media including: speaking engagements, hand outs, open houses, and outreach to the schools that have been undertaken to educate the public. The department works with the school department and area day care centers to implement fire safety programs.

We are currently developing a comprehensive fire and life safety ordinance which will guide property owners and contractors to conform to the latest standards in recognized Life Safety Code and Fire Prevention practices. This is a tool which will additionally be used by the Building Inspector and the Planning Board in accepting new construction and renovations.

3.0 DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS – PLANNING FOR THE FUTURE DPW

Our Department of Public Works (DPW) provides the main functions of: highway maintenance, solid waste management, and drainage management. The priority items in DPW planning are:

- To ensure that the Town road replacement of the existing arterials is performed in the best priority sequence, augment the continuous visual inspections done by the DPW employees with traffic counts.
- To balance funding to assure that both maintenance and improvement are timely while addressing the drainage problems caused by our ever higher density of development.
- To develop programs to maintain skills and develop new productivity skills in the veteran staff.
- To specify systematic replacement and upgrading of DPW equipment in the Capital Improvements Program

- To improve the human factors in the recycling center to serve the users better while controlling the labor costs to the town
- To monitor all work assignments to assure compliance with the spirit CBA
- To address our construction and improvement projects from the Drainage Master Plan through a well thought out and prioritized list.
- To advise the Planning Board on driveway and house sitting for poorly drained sites. Well-planned development of sites is required to avoid drainage damage to town roads.

3.1 Buildings and Equipment

The activities of our DPW are headquartered on Grove Road at Washington Road. The 4.4 acre site contains the DPW maintenance garage, the recycling center, a “Swap Shoppe”, and the brush dump.

This site is planned to have new fencing and/or screening plantings or trees along the Grove road side to increase security of the site and produce a more attractive view from the road. A new “salt shed” is needed to keep rain and snow from melting the stock pile on the site.

The equipment to perform the very different tasks of maintaining the roads and servicing the recycling center means that the skills required to safely operate the equipment are varied also. Rotation of job assignments is required to keep this variety of skills and thus to allow optimal assignment of staff. The complete list of DPW equipment is given in Table MS-5

Highway equipment is stored in the garage on Grove Road. The highway garage, which was built in 1981, is adequate to house all of the highway equipment, and there is ample land space for expansion. There is a need for additional interior space for offices and to store files.

The age of equipment varies. Fortunately older trucks have been replaced in 2003 and 2005. Generally a ten-year replacement program is desired since, as maintenance costs increase and reliability decreases, it becomes cost-effective to replace with new equipment. As the mileage of town-maintained roads increases, the amount of equipment that needs to be replaced increases proportionately.

Table MS-5 Public Works Equipment	
Description	Year New
Chevrolet 2500 ¾ T	2003
Chevrolet 2500 ¾ T	1989
Chevrolet 2500 1 T	2003
Chevrolet 2500 1 T	1999
International 4900 2 T	1998
International 4900 2 T	1996
International 7400 2 T	2003
International 1954-IH 2 T	1986
International 1954-IH 2 T	1988
Freightliner M2106	2005
Caterpillar Dozer/Loader	1986
John Deere Back Hoe	2001
Case	2003
Caterpillar Loader	1996
John Deere Mower	1980

The DPW has an excellent maintenance program that performs all levels of vehicle overhaul. Additionally, it provides service to Police vehicles and the facilities for service to Fire vehicles so cross department efficiency is achieved. Although privatization has been discussed, previous experience shows that the current system works well. The current system allows for equipment to be cared for by longer-term employees who are very familiar with the equipment and feel a sense of ownership.

3.2 Personnel

The work of our DPW is carried out by 8 full-time employees, 1 permanent part-time employee, and a Public Works Director. The Director also fulfills many of the duties of Town Engineer for the Board of Selectmen and the Planning Board. We have a seasoned staff which is well versed in the all the current day to day operations.

The key tasks of the DPW staff and management are: the maintenance and improvement of our streets and roads; the prompt clearing of snow and ice from the roadways and; attending to the needs of the users of the recycling center

The issues of drainage and road stability are key impacts to the Public Works Department, and managing them will require innovation by the department director. Approval of a new subdivision by the Planning Board or the granting of a variance by the Board of Adjustment often affects not only the schools, fire, and police but also the DPW management of drainage and staff work load Highways

The current arterial roads evolved from old farm roads laid out along the existing high ground. The underlying structures for these roads were not built to the quality required to carry the weights of today's commercial vehicles. This lack of base will forever dictate our road maintenance strategy.

Our DPW maintains all of the town's roads. Among the various duties of the department are patching roads, road re-surfacing, snow plowing, street sweeping, street sign maintenance, mowing, brush and tree trimming, removal of roadside litter, and managing the oversight of the closed landfill. Major resurfacing projects are contracted out but managed by the DPW Director. Almost all the Public Works Department workload is thus directly related to the amount of developed area in Rye. Land use decisions have a direct impact on this department. Additionally, as noted in the Transportation Assessment, increased conversion of seasonal houses will lead to increased demands for upgrading some of the substandard coastal streets. Although Routes 1 and 1A also run through Rye they are state-maintained roads.

The DPW, working with the Planning Board, makes sure that new streets are laid out maximizing efficiency and usefulness to the Town. The proper layout also minimizes plowing and maintenance costs. The review process and follow-up inspections prior to town acceptance of new streets are critical because the cost of new road construction, paid for by the developers, can be dwarfed by the town's costs if they are built incorrectly.

To ensure that the Town optimizes road maintenance funds, a road inventory must be made. This also registers which roads are town-owned and which are privately owned as well as the classification of each Town Street and road. The DPW Director uses a Computerized Road Surface Management System which was designed and implemented by Rye DPW to inventory roads and manage the department's maintenance and plowing programs.

The highway aspects of the DPW's role are further discussed in the Transportation Chapter.

3.3 Solid Waste Management

The options available to Rye for its future solid waste disposal were studied by the "Dump Committee" during the 1980's. The committee studied viable alternatives for waste disposal, including: expansion of the current landfill; building a transfer station to hold waste until it is hauled to another site; or pickup with direct haul to the Turnkey landfill in Rochester. We chose the option of a recycling center.

At the March 1990 Town Meeting, we gave our approval to begin a mandatory recycling program. Taxpayers may leave their used motor oil, aluminum and steel cans, common types of plastic containers, glass, slick paper, cardboard and newsprint. Fees are charged for disposal of tires, steel, furniture, and construction wood.

Recycling has removed one-third of the load on the landfill. Figure MS-1 shows the results of our recycling program on offsetting the cost of the department. The tonnage of waste "tipped" in Rye has been minimized even though the town has grown in number of families. The tonnage of waste recycled has shown an interesting trend compared to the amount tipped as seen in Figure MS-2. This is due to our varying use of private carters and the fact both glass and plastic containers are recycled. More and more glass is now being replaced by plastic as the packaging of choice and plastic is much lighter.

The value of recycling to the Town fluctuates as the market prices for recyclable materials moves. Thus comparing figures MS-1 and MS-2 you can see that from 2001 to 2004 the value of recycled material **increased** by \$14,876 while the tonnage **decreased** by 131 Tons.

Figure MS-1

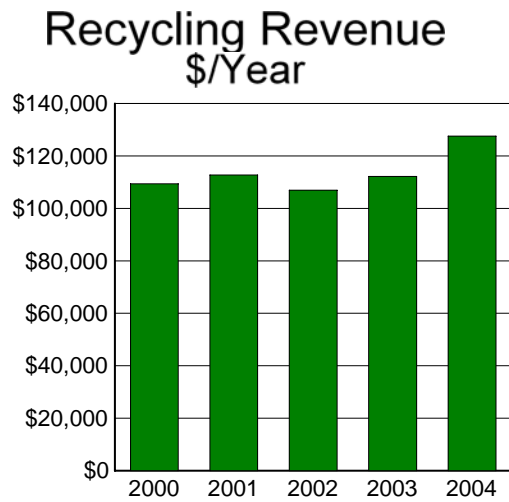
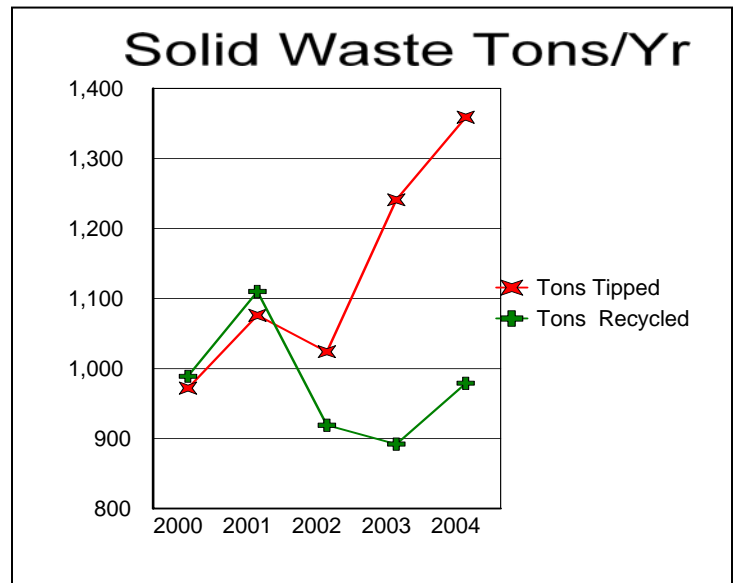


Figure MS-2



Brush and Christmas trees are chipped to be used for mulching by both the DPW and by all of us. The Town has a designated dump in Epping for stumps and wood construction debris. Rye provides no curbside pickup but independent carters perform this service on a monthly contract basis.

3.4 Drainage

There was no concept of a drainage plan when Rye was settled. As the Town grew no plan was ever put into place. Stormwater drains have been constructed in Rye over the years to correct for drainage problems inherent in the topography as well as those caused by development. As the amount of land, capable of absorbing stormwater is reduced, by building and surfacing for vehicles, the need for storm drainage facilities increases. One property owner's good drainage system can result in problems for his neighbors. For this reason, all proposed subdivision and site plans are carefully studied by the Planning Board to avoid storm drainage problems to downstream properties.

Rye is developing a "Master Drainage Plan" encompassing the entire town. Problem areas will be identified and listed by priority, and the department will complete improvements as funding permits. As development expands and intensifies, the stormwater drainage system will need to be improved. For example, today site developers are frequently required to build storm runoff retention ponds. However, no overall planning is done to require drainage easements to allow the retention ponds to drain expeditiously into the existing watersheds.

Insert source Rye Wellhead Water protection area map (NH DES)

Implementation of this high priority item to keep up with expanding development is very important.

4.0 RYE WATER DISTRICT

Vision

Overview

4.1 Water Sources

Until 2004, the primary sources of water for the District were the Garland and Bailey Brook wells. The Garland well is a gravel packed well and Bailey Brook is a deep driven bedrock well. Water is also purchased from the city of Portsmouth to serve customers north of Foye's Corner. In 2004, Cedar Run, a second deep driven bedrock well, was put into service by the District. The District distribution system consists of approximately 33 miles of mains, 253 hydrants and three storage tanks. Two tanks are located on Washington Road and the third at Breakfast Hill on Rt. 1. Annual demand has been between 127 and 147 million gallons over the past 5 years. The system averages 400,000 gallons pumped per day with 2.2 million gallons of total storage capacity.

4.2 Water Quality

The District has been fortunate to be able to supply water that meets all State and Federal quality standards with minimal treatment. Water quality is sampled monthly and the results are provided to the New Hampshire Department of Environmental Services (NHDES). Water quality data is also reported to all District customers in the annual Consumer Confidence report.

The District requires back-flow prevention devices in all residential installations. Beginning in 2003, the District established a comprehensive program to certify back-flow devices in all commercial installations. Back-flow devices prevent contamination of the distribution system in the case of a loss of positive pressure in the system. District personnel have been qualified to perform this certification.

The District manages the Wellhead Protection Program which controls the areas within a 4000 foot radius of each well. Commercial customers are inspected on a periodic basis and we advise best management practices for control and disposal of hazardous materials that could affect our water sources.

Residential customers are advised to dispose of household chemicals and hazardous materials at the regional annual hazardous material collection day conducted in Hampton. Flyers are distributed in advance of the date to all customers within the Wellhead Protection Area.

4.3 System maintenance and Improvements

The District reviews distribution system extension and improvement projects during development of the annual operating budget. Whenever possible, the District funds projects from the operating budget in lieu of bonding. At this time, the number of smaller projects remaining that can be completed within the operating budget is decreasing and the size and cost of future projects will require bonding.

The District has completed initial mapping of the distribution system using Geographic Information System (GIS) computer data and will be refining this model for use in maintenance planning and documentation of system information.

Next Steps

In 2005, the District participated in an engineering study with nine other Seacoast cities, towns and water suppliers to determine the feasibility of emergency mutual aid interconnections between abutting communities. Water transfers would be made on a temporary basis in emergency conditions only. The preliminary study was completed in 2005 and the results were presented to the Town of Rye Emergency Planning Committee in March 2006. The District will continue to participate in this study and any others of a similar nature.

Separately, the District has initiated an engineering study to assess changes to the current system. This study will cover current and future water demand, the potential to develop additional wells and the costs/benefits of a central collection and treatment facility. The District is also exploring the purchase of an electric generator for use as an emergency backup power source to run the well pumps.

5.0 SCHOOLS

The Rye School District has an elementary school and a junior high school. High school students are taught at the Portsmouth High School or other private High Schools. The Rye Junior High School occupies a site of 3.8 acres just north of Lang Road. It was built in 1933 and had major additions in 1949 and 1965 and 2004. The Rye Elementary School was built in 1955 on a site off Sagamore Road just north of the Wallis Road intersection. A four room addition was made in 1965, and in 1984 kindergarten was added. The Town owns a total of thirty eight (38) acres at the elementary school as the site extends westward to the Portsmouth City line.

Rye Elementary School is a public elementary providing quality education to students from Pre-K through Grade 5. Rye Elementary School was chosen by the U.S. Department of Education as a Blue Ribbon School of Excellence for the 1998-1999 school years.

Rye Junior High School is located in the center of Rye, New Hampshire in the midst of the Historic District. The immediate area includes historic homes dating from 1739, Parsons Park (town field and forest saved for community use through community effort). The school is a sixth through eighth grade facility constructed in four phases during the years 1932,

1942, 1965 and 1997. The building houses 208 students coming from the towns of Rye and New Castle. The Rye Junior High School staff demonstrates a commitment to the middle school concept by placing emphasis on positive student/teacher relationships and responds to the interest and needs (academic, social and emotional) of young adolescents.

Its comprehensive educational program includes the basic discipline areas of mathematics, language arts, social studies and science. In addition, French, art, music, physical education, life skills and industrial arts/technology education are available.

Mission Statement

Rye Junior High School will provide appropriately responsive school programs, policies, and practices to meet the particular intellectual, physical, social, and emotional needs of each middle level learner. Young adolescents are talented in unique ways with a personal mix of diverse intelligences. Everyone within the community shares a responsibility for developing and nurturing the whole child. Every young adolescent can learn, and we resolve to make that learning a reality.

The school system has a good reputation and has a demonstrably positive effect on real estate values

5.1 Financial Considerations

Full time kindergarten was approved by the voters of Rye in March, 2006.

Table MS-6 Population Enrollment for the Rye Schools													
SCHOOL YEAR	Grades												TOTAL POP.
	P	K	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	K-5	6-8	
2005-2006	170	47	59	65	58	49	62	54	80	75	340	208	548
2004-2005	183	53	62	57	49	64	52	78	73	63	337	214	551
2003-2004		49	53	45	68	54	76	62	66	75	361	203	564
2002-2003		44	44	68	49	76	61	54	77	84	358	215	573
2001-2002		29	71	47	82	63	51	71	88	63	343	222	580
2000-2001		47	49	82	59	49	72	72	62	100	358	234	604
1999-2000		30	78	58	70	54	72	56	98	77	363	231	606
1998-1999		52	58	49	67	63	59	84	74	54	363	212	575
1997-1998		47	54	70	58	56	77	66	51	62	377	179	556
1996-1997		37	63	58	55	76	59	44	61	59	367	164	531
1995-1996		49	60	53	71	58	41	53	63	59	356	175	531
1994-1995		46	57	72	57	37	50	56	59	57	327	172	499

5.2 Schools

The Rye School District has an elementary school and a junior high school. High school students are taught at the Portsmouth High School. The Rye Junior High School occupies a site of 3.8 acres just north of Land Road. It was built in 1933 and has major additions in 1949 and 1965. The Rye Elementary School was built in 1955 on a site off Sagamore Road just north of the Wallis Road intersection. A four room addition was made in 1965, in 1984 kindergarten was added and in 2006 full-day kindergarten was offered. The Town owns a total of thirty eight (38) acres at the Elementary School as the site extends westward to the Portsmouth City line.

The school system has 67 full-time and part-time professional staff, as well as, support from the SAU staff of 4 professional staff members and 5 administrative personnel. The school system has a strong reputation, ranks high among schools throughout the state and demonstrates a positive effect on real estate values.

5.3 School District Goals (2006-2007)

The Rye School Board and Administration meet annually during the summer to set the vision and goals for the future year. During the summer of 2006, the team met to review and reinforce their five main goals of: Curriculum, Leadership and Organization, Communication, Assessment and Accountability and Budget. The mission, goals and action items follow:

The Rye School District's mission is to provide an outstanding learning and teaching environment that meets every child's academic, social, physical and personal needs.

The standards and measurements for excellence that guide our District are stated in the New England Association of Schools and Colleges Standards for Accreditation (NEASC Standards for Middle and Elementary Schools: <http://neasc.org/cpes/>).

CURRICULUM	
Goal	To continue the development and implementation of rigorous curricula in all subject areas to ensure that every student in our district is appropriately challenged and learning at their highest level.
Actions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Research and develop a formal method/process for program evaluation that includes input from teachers (1), parents and the community, information from SAU 50 and peer schools about their program(s) and a timeline for the process, including completing a time-on-learning study 68, to help with future curriculum and instruction decisions. 2. Make a proposal for the RJH foreign language program to include Spanish for the 2007-08 school year. 3. Define a model to inform the Board of anticipated or planned curriculum changes. 4. Make a proposal for the Art and Music programs for the 2007-08 school year.

COMMUNICATION

Goal

To expand existing and/or develop new opportunities for communication that support mutual respect, common purpose and shared support among all members of the school community.

Action

1. Give quarterly reports on the implementation of the formal Communications Plan.

LEADERSHIP AND ORGANIZATION

Goal

Continue to inspire and direct a culture of excellence that supports the School District's mission to meet every child's academic, social, physical and personal needs using the New England Association of Schools and Colleges (NEASC) Leadership Standards as a guide.

Actions

1. Present a proposal and establish a School Advisory Council at each school to advise principals and give feedback on new ideas.
2. Negotiate a three year contract with the Association of Coastal Teachers – Rye for the period July 1, 2007 to June 30, 2010 (2).
3. Hire an RJH Principal.
4. Integrate training on how to effectively meet or exceed the needs of the greater school community (parents, community members and colleges in addition to students) into SAU/Administrator driven professional development.

BUDGET

Goal

To develop a fiscally responsible budget that supports the Rye District's mission.

Action

1. Research opportunities to reduce bus costs and enhance service.
2. Identify opportunities to share resources across the two schools (i.e., technology, custodial and other areas).
3. Evaluate stipends based on what stipends exist, what should exist and if they are equitable.

ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY

Goal

Meaningfully measure the school's progress on the District's mission, identifying successes to celebrate and areas to improve. Where improvement is needed, efficiently implement an effective improvement plan.

Actions

1. Complete a District Report Card.
2. Develop a stakeholder (parent, teachers, students, community) feedback process (K9) to measure progress on the District's mission by asking people to assess whether or not the schools are meeting their child's academic, social, physical and personal needs.
3. Revise the formal evaluation process for non-tenured teachers.

Additionally, the school board has a series of on-going goals. More information about these goals and timeframes can be found on the school board website (www.ryeschoolboard.us).

In addition to the action plans for this year, several of the highlights from last year include:

- Successfully, transitioned to a new administrator at Rye Elementary School.
- Implemented a full-day kindergarten program.
- Implemented multi-languages throughout the Rye school system. Both Spanish and French are now offered to students at Rye Elementary School and will soon be offered at Rye Junior High School.
- Created a formal communications strategy and plan was developed to improve communication across all stakeholders.
- Began to open up a dialogue with the University of New Hampshire to develop a partnership with their student internship program.
- Developed a peer school committee to exchange best practices with other schools.

5.4 Financial Considerations

In 1996, a bond of \$5,600,000 was approved to add space, to renovate and to update both schools. This work brought all the facilities up to the level desired and expected by parents and citizens of a well educated tow like Rye. Special programs, music and computer training were among those benefiting from the upgraded physical plant.

As of September 2006, warrant articles have contributed approximately \$300,000 to a fund to repair the roof of the Elementary School. The roof has had many leaks over recent years. It is estimated that the roof repair will cost between \$400,000 and \$460,000. It is anticipated that this project will begin within the next two years.

In regards to operating expenses, Figures MS-3 and MS-4 show the growth in operating budget and costs per student in the Rye school system. These operating expenses (capital expenditures were not included in this analysis) have run ahead of the inflation rate since the early 1980's. There are causes for this which are common to the public education environment. Perhaps the most significant nationwide phenomena are the rise in the cost of "Special Education" programs, increases in the tuition rate to Portsmouth High School, the recent increases in health care costs and the fact that teacher salaries have consistently risen faster than the inflation rate as measured by CPI.

Table MS-7 Rye School Budget	
Budget Year	Budget
2001-2002	8,031,261
2002-2003	8,489,721
2003-2004	9,178,172
2004-2005	9,671,543
2005-2006	10,001,509

Figure MS-3

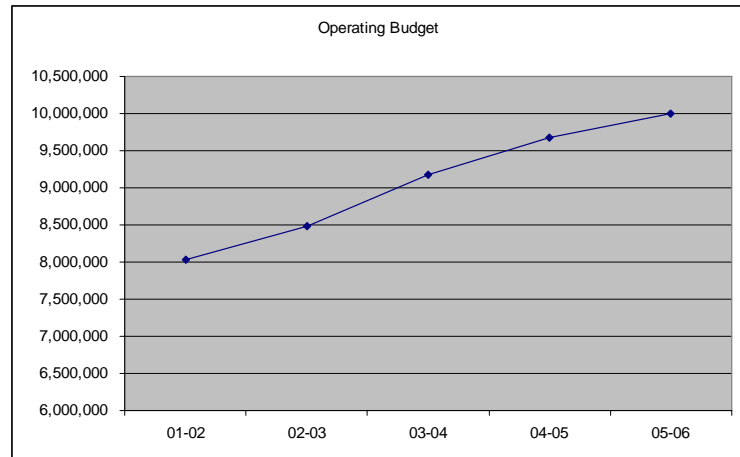
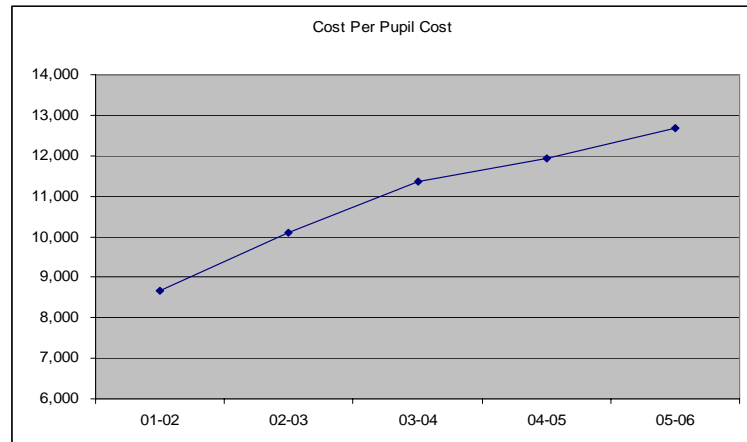


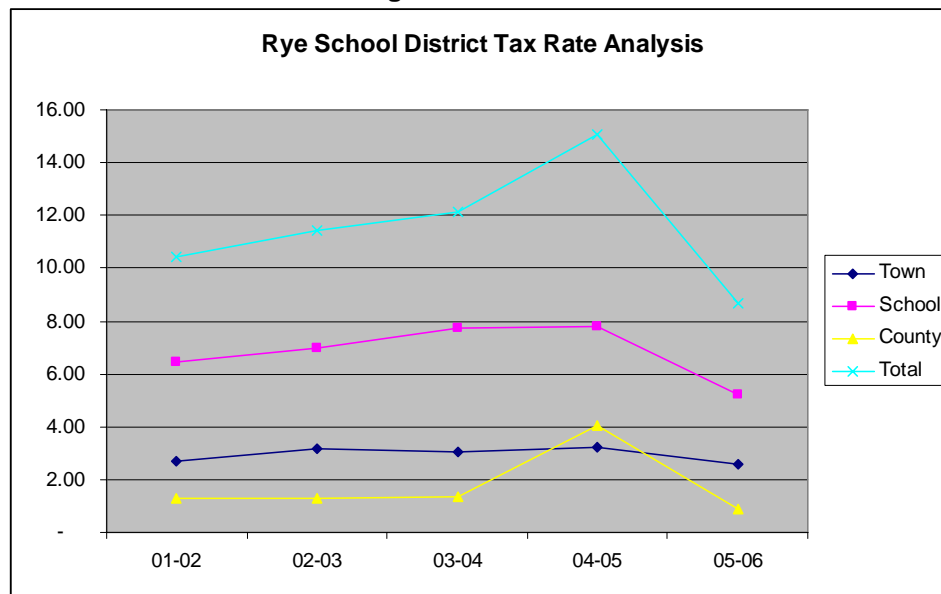
Figure MS-4



Comparing the tax rate contributions for town, school and county tax assessments, the percentage of school taxes to the total tax rate has remained fairly constant over the past five years and is at it's lowest during the most recent year, 2005-2006.

Table MS-9 Tax Rate Analysis					
Year	Town	School	County	Total	% School
2001-2002	2.69	6.42	1.31	10.42	61.6
2002-2003	3.14	6.98	1.31	11.43	61.1
2003-2004	3.06	7.73	1.33	12.12	63.8
2004-2005	3.24	7.78	1.32	12.34	63.0
2005-2006	2.58	5.21	0.87	8.66	60.2

Figure MS-5



Finally, the student population in K-8 has been decreasing over the past several years. The school board will be watching this trend and making appropriate adjustments.

Figure MS-6

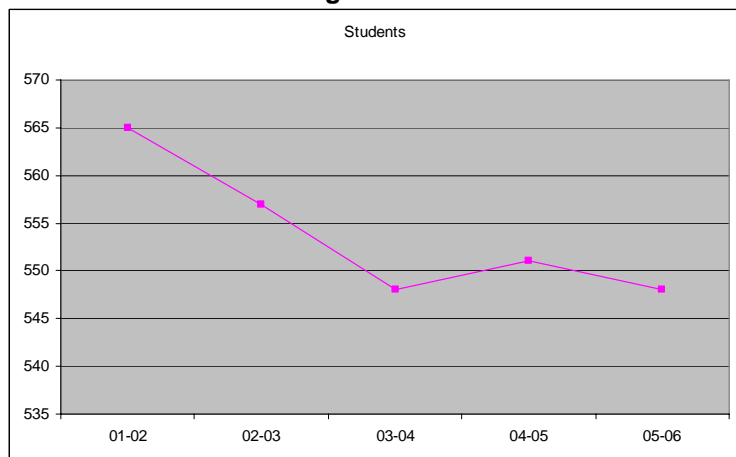


Table MS-10 K-8 Oct. 1 st Enrollment	
Year	Students
2001-2002	565
2002-2003	557
2003-2004	548
2004-2005	551
2005-2006	548

6.0 RECREATION

The Town of Rye Recreation Commission believes that recreation provide a critical foundation for the quality of life that makes Rye unique. Recreation is essential to the health and well-being of the individual residents and the community or Rye. Recreation activities and services have far reaching personal, social, economic and environmental benefits. The role of the Town of Rye Recreation Department is to ensure that a broad range of recreation opportunities are available and accessible for all residents and that these are consistent with the needs and interest of the community and the space and resources available.

The Recreation Department continually gets request for additional services, programming and facilities for residents of all ages. Current priority has been given to the establishment of a Recreation Master Plan. In the upcoming months the population, demographics and growth characteristics for the Town of Rye will be analyzed to determine current and future user demands on recreation facilities and programs. Residents will have the opportunity to participate in a recreation survey. Existing town wide recreation property, trails, facilities and undeveloped recreation lands will be analyzed for future development opportunities. Future parks, trails, fields and facility needs will be considered based on existing natural standards for parks and recreation for Rye's demographics. Capital improvements to existing and future facilities will be identified. Schematic site plan alternatives of existing and future recreation fields and facilities will be compiled. The final Recreation Master Plan document will hopefully be available in the fall of 2007.

The November 2004 visioning session identified the need for a community center and an outdoor flooded skating rink.

At this time, Rye's Recreation Department provides a wide range of programs, services and facilities. Some programs offered included speaker series, after school programs, Rye Art in Bloom, indoor tennis lessons, yoga, winter day camp, babysitter's course, adult and infant CPR courses, first aid courses, culinary classes, summertime horizons day camp, basketball, golf, soccer, basketball camp, soccer camp, lacrosse camp, holiday crafts, knitting classes, ski and snowboard lessons, body life and Pilates. The Recreation Department is also responsible for the Memorial Day Ceremony and the Independence Day Celebration.

Each year over 100 volunteers and successful community relationships assist with the delivery of programs and services.

The Recreation Commission is a voluntary board that meets monthly. Meetings are open to the public and your attendance is welcomed.

7.0 PUBLIC LIBRARY

7.1 Mission Statement

The Rye Public Library serves as the informational and cultural heart of the Town of Rye in an atmosphere that is friendly and inviting. Our mission is to facilitate a diverse inquiry for knowledge and ideas, to promote the enjoyment of reading and to provide exceptional service. We offer free access to a broad array of materials and programs for the enrichment of all members of the Rye community at every stage of their lives.

---Adopted by the Rye Public Library Board of Trustees, January 4, 2007.

The incumbent Board of Trustees and staff of the Rye Public Library, for several years, have recognized the need and have been setting the stage for the development of a comprehensive strategic plan outlining future directions and service priorities. In the Spring of 2007, with the stability that comes with a new Library Director on board, with the newly expanded

Board of Trustees in place, and with a major building expansion and related issues a recent memory, we are initiating a formal strategic and master planning process, which will include a more detailed evaluation of the 2005 customer satisfaction survey and the formation of focus groups of all interested stakeholders, including townspeople, community organizations, and local schools. We hope to conclude this planning process by the end of the 2007 calendar year.

In 2005, the Rye Public Library, in conjunction with the University of New Hampshire Survey Center, conducted a comprehensive customer satisfaction survey of all Rye residents, both year-round and seasonal. An analysis of the survey results and comments resulted in the implementation of many immediate service improvements, including greater outreach to senior residents by providing home deliveries of library materials and transportation to the library for programs via the Rye Senior SERVE van. The Rye Public Library also has strengthened its presence in the community by conducting a library card drive at the 2006 election polls, and by offering welcome packets with pertinent information outlining town services for new residents. The Library has greatly increased the number of computers available to patrons, in a Wi-Fi environment, and is currently exploring adaptive technology enhancements that will offer seniors greater access to our electronic resources. Conclusions drawn from survey data have resulted in the realignment of collection acquisition priorities to accommodate the community's request for additional DVD's, large print, and audio books.

In 2007, the Rye Public Library received a grant to participate in the New Hampshire State Library's downloadable audio book program. This will further satisfy the need for additional audio books by providing 24/7 access to a digital media collection of more than one thousand titles for all ages on multiple genres. In addition, based on programming preferences identified in the 2005 community survey, the Rye Public Library plans to offer a year-long genealogy lecture series during 2007-2008. Due to the popularity of the Friends of the Rye Public Library's annual lecture series and children's programming, and with their continued support, we hope to increase the number of educational, cultural, and musical programs, offered throughout the year. Additional improvements underway for 2007 include the launch of a professionally-designed new web site, and thanks to the generous support of the Friends of the Rye Public Library, a significant upgrade to the audiovisual equipment and versatility of our well-used Community Meeting Room.

Concordance

Arterial – road that carries the major portion of traffic entering and exiting a community. May be further classified as –

Principal Arterial: Serve major centers of activity, the highest traffic volume corridors, and the longest routes.

Minor Arterial: Links and supports the principal arterial system. Minor arterials are roads which place a greater emphasis on land access than the principal arterial and therefore offer a lower level of mobility. They serve as links between larger and smaller towns or as connections between collectors and the primary arterials. These routes can also serve as commercial corridors with a wide variety of businesses along their lengths.

Average -- a number calculated by summing all values in a group, then dividing by the number of values in that group.

BOA – Zoning Board of Adjustment. Rye’s land use board responsible for administering the intent of the Master Plan through the hearing of proposed projects that would not meet all requirements of Rye’s zoning ordinance. It hears appeals to Planning Board decisions and grants variances and special exceptions, where appropriate. It is comprised of five members serving 3-year terms each.

Collectors – roads that provide both access to land uses along the roadway and circulation within residential neighborhoods, commercial and/or industrial areas. It differs from the arterial system in that the facilities on the collector system may penetrate residential neighborhoods. Collectors also collect traffic from the local streets in residential neighborhoods and channel it into the arterial system.

COAST -- Cooperative Alliance for Seacoast Transportation. It provides bus service to the seacoast region of New Hampshire (Rockingham and Strafford Counties) and Berwick, Maine <http://www.coastbus.org/>.

Demand-response – transportation arranged at the initiation of the rider by calling a provider.

Family – for purposes of this plan, a family is defined as persons living in the same housing unit who are related by birth, marriage or adoption.

Fixed-route – classic bus service that riders meet at established stops along regular routes.

Household – for purposes of this plan, a household as defined as all persons who occupy a housing unit, whether related or not.

Master Plan – the legislatively required document articulating a community’s vision for growth. The intent is to guide deliberate and desirable land use decisions.

Median -- the number in the center of a group of values, whereby half the values are higher and half are lower than it is.

MPO -- Metropolitan Planning Organizations are comprised of communities making up an urban area. Rye is part of the Seacoast MPO.

Planning Board – land use board charged by the Board of Selectmen with creating and enforcing the Town’s land use regulations and ordinances. Rye’s Planning Board is comprised of seven members, each serving 3-year terms.

Public transportation -- any transportation service available to the general public, whether it is publicly or privately funded.

SERVE – Serving Elder Residents through Volunteer Efforts. This Rye organization assists Rye senior citizens with local transportation and other matters. For further information regarding the services that SERVE provides, residents should call the Rye Public Library at 964-8401 or view the SERVE website at <http://www.town.rye.nh.us/seniorservices.htm>.

Special exception – allows for a type of land use not specifically allowed in a given zoning district. It is a privilege, not a right, an exception that may be granted by the Zoning Board of Adjustment, subject to appropriate conditions and safeguards.

Variance – a variation from the requirements of Rye’s zoning ordinance.

Wildcat Transit – bus service focusing on connections between Durham/UNH and adjacent communities of Dover, Newmarket, Newington, and Portsmouth.

Primer on New Hampshire Transportation Planning

Transportation decision-making in New Hampshire is carried out at several levels:

- Local governments carry out many transportation planning functions such as scheduling improvements and maintenance for local roads.
- Public or private transit agencies such as COAST, Wildcat Transit, and Amtrak, provide bus, rail, boat, and trolley transportation to the general public.
- Metropolitan Planning Organizations are responsible for transportation planning in areas that have a population of 50,000 people or more. In New Hampshire, this planning primarily includes such tasks as establishing policy, reviewing projects, programs and plans to broaden public participation in the transportation planning process. MPOs in New Hampshire do not have authority over transportation programming. They do not receive sub-allocations from the State for the selection and implementation of major transportation projects or have veto rights.
- NHDOT is the unit of state government that programs, coordinates and implements the transportation projects for the state. It aids in the development of transportation reports, plans and projects. NHDOT staff actively works with all of the state's transportation organizations and local governments to help plan safe and efficient transportation between cities and towns in the state.
- The role of the federal government (U.S. DOT) is to oversee the transportation planning and project activities of the Seacoast MPO and NHDOT, provide advice and training on transportation topics, and supply critical funding needed for transportation planning and projects. It is the federal government that puts the final approval on the Transportation Improvement Program, the program of projects submitted by NHDOT that includes projects proposed for Federal Funds.

Regional integration and coordination of transportation planning occurs via the Seacoast Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO). It covers 36 New Hampshire communities in the Portsmouth and Dover-Rochester urbanized areas. By law it is required to develop and maintain two planning and programming documents that help to coordinate transportation planning and projects on a regional level: a Long Range Transportation Plan and a Transportation Improvement Program (TIP).

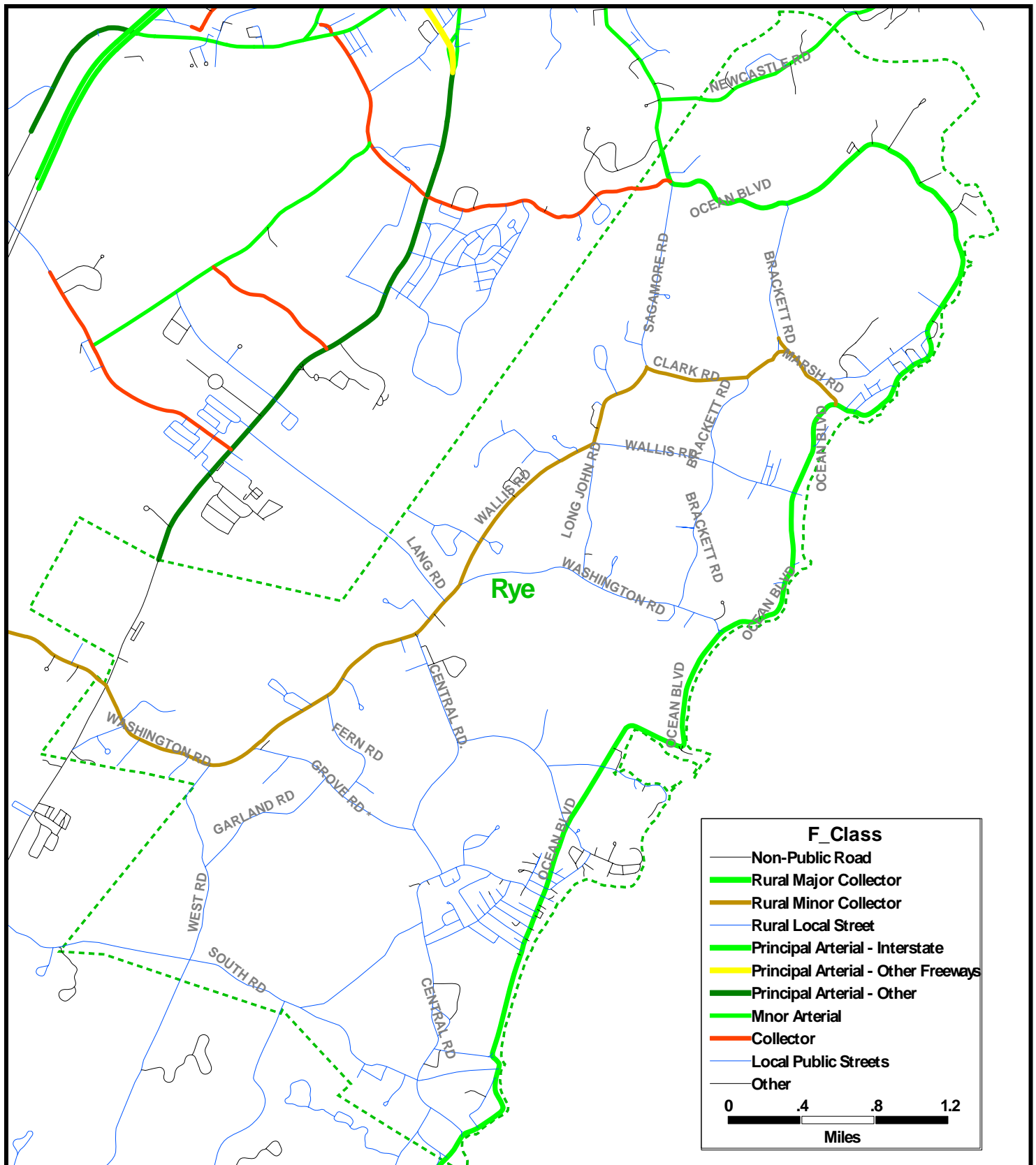
Appendix 1

Functional [Federal] Road Classifications

Map 1 shows the distribution of Rye's roads according to their functional classifications. Higher order roadways (arterials) are more oriented towards moving traffic, and lower order roadways (collectors and local streets) are oriented towards providing access to land uses adjacent to the roadway (see Concordance). These distinctions are important because functional classes are used to determine whether and under what conditions Federal highway funds may be utilized: roads that have a class of Collector or higher are eligible for Federal highway funds. In addition, understanding the function of each roadway is important in setting policy and for designing improvements. In Rye, our major roads are classified as follows:

- ***Principal Arterial:*** Serve major centers of activity, the highest traffic volume corridors, and the longest routes. In addition, they generally carry the major portion of traffic entering and exiting the community. Route 1 performs that function through Rye and is connected directly to the town via Washington Road as well as via Lang and Elwyn Roads through Portsmouth. This highway provides connections to Interstate 95 and the Spaulding Turnpike.
- ***Minor Arterial:*** Links and supports the principal arterial system. Minor arterials are roads which place a greater emphasis on land access than the principal arterial and therefore offer a lower level of mobility. They serve as links between larger and smaller towns or as connections between collectors and the primary arterials. These routes can also serve as commercial corridors with a wide variety of businesses along their lengths. NH 1B performs this function through Rye and connects Newcastle to Portsmouth via NH 1A (Ocean Boulevard) and Elwyn Road.
- ***Collector:*** Provides both access to land uses along the roadway and circulation within residential neighborhoods, and/or to commercial and industrial areas. It differs from the arterial system in that the facilities on the collector system may penetrate residential neighborhoods. Conversely, the collectors also collect traffic from the local streets in residential neighborhoods and channel it into the arterial system. This classification can be further divided into major and minor collectors. Outside of urban compact areas, those routes that serve as arterials become collectors. Ocean Boulevard (NH 1A) is considered a Major Collector due to its rural setting, while Elwyn Road is considered an Urban Collector due to its proximity to Portsmouth and connection to US 1. Washington, Wallis, and Sagamore, and several other roads are also considered more minor Rural Collectors.
- ***Local Roads:*** Comprise all facilities not on any of the three systems described above. Their function is to primarily provide direct access to abutting land and access to the higher order systems. They offer the lowest level of mobility, and service to through traffic movement is usually discouraged. Local roads are generally not eligible for federal funding for improvements or maintenance. In Rye, these local roadways account for over 70% of the total roadway miles.

Map 1 shows the distribution of Rye’s roads according to their functional classifications



Appendix II

Rye has many faces. Together we make Rye a town of which to be proud. Thank you for your contributions.

Friends of the Rye Public Library	Rye Library Trustees
Learning Skills Academy	Rye Lions Club
Rye Art Study Group	Rye Little League Baseball
Rye Beach Board of Adjustment	Rye Long Range Planning Committee
Rye Beach Commission	Rye Mosquito Control Commission
Rye Beach Planning Board	Rye Open Space Committee
Rye Board of Adjustment	Rye Over 55 Club
Rye Board of Selectmen	Rye Planning Board
Rye Boy Scouts Troop # 181	Rye PTA
Rye Brownie Troop # 2159	Rye Recreation Commission
Rye Budget Committee	Rye Reflections
Rye Cadet Girl Scouts	Rye School Board
Rye Cemetery Trustees	Rye Senior SERVE
Rye Capital Improvement Program Committee	Rye Sewer Commission
Rye Communication Committee	Rye Technical Review Committee
Rye Congregational Church	Rye Trustees of Trust Funds
Rye Conservation Commission	Rye Veterans Grave Site Project
Rye Cub Scouts Pack # 183	Rye Water District
Rye Driftwood Garden Club	Rye Webmaster
Rye Education Foundation	Seacoast Science Center
Rye Girl Scouts	Seacoast Memorial Post #8942 of the
Rye Junior Girl Scouts Troop #2663	Veterans of Foreign Wars
Rye Historic District Commission	St Theresa Parish
Rye Historical Society	VITA (Volunteer Income Tax Assistance)
Rye Land Use Committee	Webster at Rye Volunteer Program

We also recognize that our citizens actively support many additional organizations centered outside of Rye but from which we benefit. These include Families First, Crossroads House, and many others too numerous to name here. The sum of all these efforts contributes to making Rye a great place to live. Thank you!

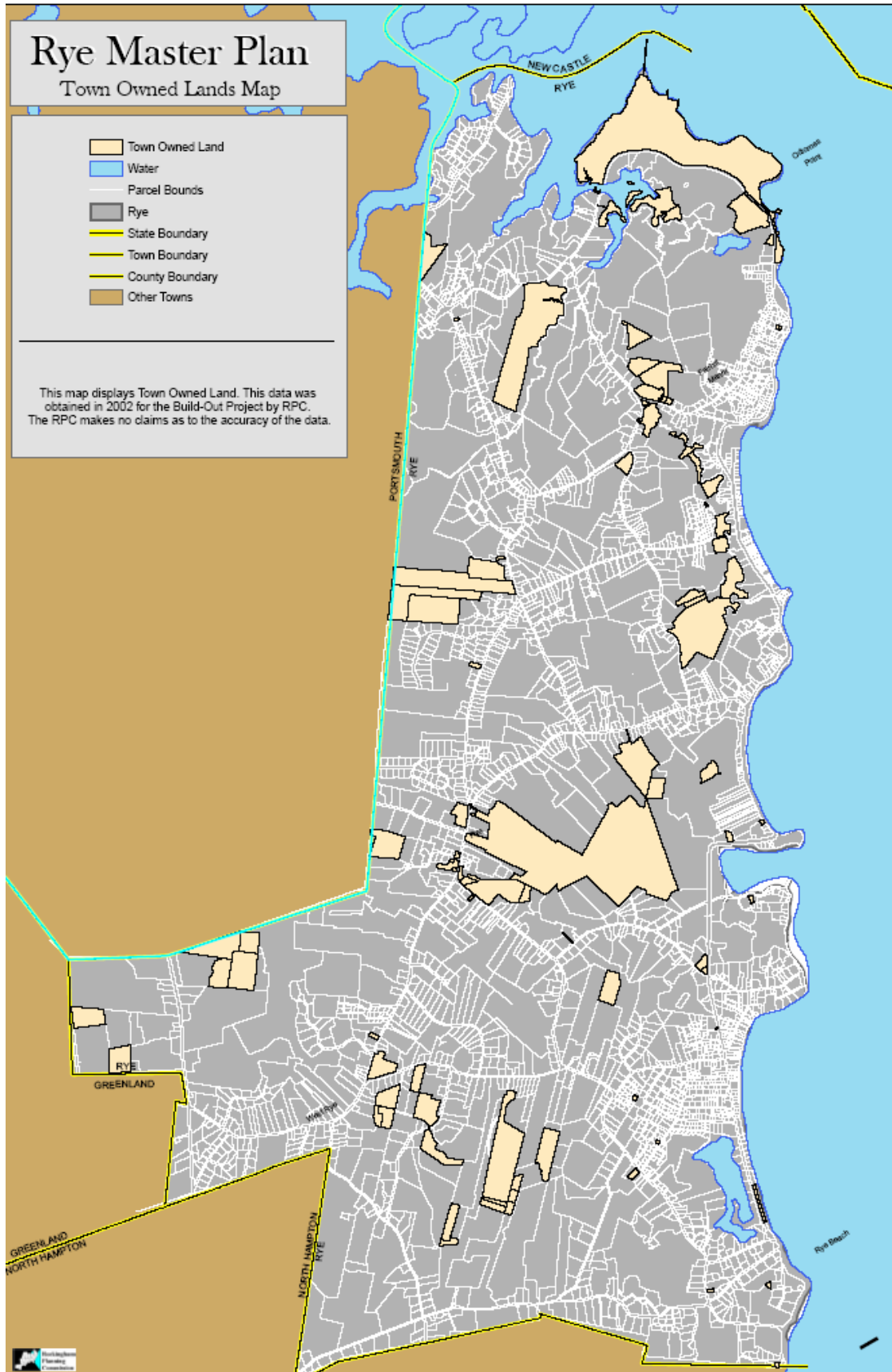
Appendix III

Parcels of Land Presently Owned In Some Way by the Town

Owner	Location	Map	Lot
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 PARSONS ROAD	19	100
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 BRACKETT ROAD	19	99
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	19	121
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	1173 OCEAN BOULEVARD	194	58
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	194	57
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	13	34
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LAFAYETTE ROAD	15	1
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	1807 OCEAN BOULEVARD	13	2
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 SOUTH ROAD	4	23
CONSERVATION COMMISSION	14 HUNTERVALE AVENUE	81	94
CONSERVATION COMMISSION, TOWN	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	23	13
CONSERVATION COMMISSION, TOWN	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	25	7
CONSERVATION COMMISSION, TOWN	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	23	14
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	23	10
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WEST ROAD	4	21
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	25	6
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WEST ROAD	4	16
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 BRACKETT ROAD	17	58
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	20 WALLIS ROAD	173	7
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WASHINGTON ROAD	12	89
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	96 GROVE ROAD	7	96
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 MOUNTAIN VIEW TERRACE	11	32
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WEST ROAD	4	20
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	180 HARBOR ROAD	8	55
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LOCKE ROAD	8	66
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 SOUTH ROAD	4	22
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 CENTRAL ROAD	8	23
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	329 BRACKETT ROAD	19	37
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WALLIS ROAD	173	6
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	23	8
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	214 WASHINGTON ROAD	16	170
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	2080 OCEAN BOULEVARD	84	159
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 PIONEER ROAD	25	9
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	19	120
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 BRACKETT ROAD	17	56
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 BRACKETT ROAD	17	60
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LAFAYETTE ROAD	10	12
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LAFAYETTE ROAD	14	2
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LAFAYETTE ROAD	14	14
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LAFAYETTE ROAD	15	2
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	2029 OCEAN BOULEVARD	8	68
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 CENTRAL ROAD	7	86
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 SOUTH ROAD	4	24
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 ROCK ORCHARD LANE	18	28
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 VICTORY LANE	18	32

Owner	Location	Map	Lot
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WASHINGTON ROAD	12	90
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LAFAYETTE ROAD	14	13
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	23	15
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 SAGAMORE ROAD	24	71
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 BRACKETT ROAD	22	101
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LAFAYETTE ROAD	14	15
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	96 GROVE ROAD	7	96
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	6 WHITEHORSE DRIVE	11	2
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	WHITEHORSE DRIVE	11	3
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	100 GROVE ROAD	7	93
RYE GROCERY PARTNERSHIP	919 WASHINGTON ROAD	11	10
RYE HISTORICAL SOCIETY	10 OLDE PARISH ROAD	12	44
RYE TOWN OF	0 WALLIS ROAD	17	84
RYE TOWN OF	0 PARSONS ROAD	22	99
RYE TOWN OF	0 BRACKETT ROAD	22	61
RYE TOWN OF	330 SAGAMORE ROAD	19	69
RYE TOWN OF	44 WALLIS ROAD	17	51
RYE TOWN OF	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	194	59
RYE TOWN OF	0 BRACKETT ROAD	22	69
RYE, TOWN OF	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	17	83
RYE, TOWN OF	179 PIONEER ROAD	22	74
RYE, TOWN OF	0 LOCKE ROAD	12	2
RYE, TOWN OF	0 BRACKETT ROAD	22	98
RYE, TOWN OF	255 PARSONS ROAD	19	101
RYE, TOWN OF	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	13	35
RYE, TOWN OF	76 LIBERTY COMMON	18	116
RYE, TOWN OF	1695 OCEAN BOULEVARD	13	8
RYE, TOWN OF	0 NEPTUNE DRIVE	202	61
RYE, TOWN OF	5 NEPTUNE DRIVE	202	60
RYE, TOWN OF	2025 OCEAN BOULEVARD	8	67
RYE, TOWN OF	0 WEST ROAD	4	15
RYE, TOWN OF	555 WASHINGTON ROAD	16	7
RYE, TOWN OF	575 WASHINGTON ROAD	12	43
RYE, TOWN OF	245 PARSONS ROAD	19	102
RYE, TOWN OF	2380 OCEAN BOULEVARD	5	57
RYE, TOWN OF	50 LANG ROAD	15	15
RYE, TOWN OF	0 OCEAN BOULEVARD	84	45
RYE, TOWN OF	0 PIONEER ROAD	25	10
RYE, TOWN OF	0 BRACKETT ROAD	19	94
RYE, TOWN OF	0 RECREATION RD	12	79
RYE, TOWN OF	581 WASHINGTON ROAD	12	42
RYE, TOWN OF	561 WASHINGTON ROAD	16	6
RYE, TOWN OF	0 WASHINGTON ROAD	12	53
RYE, TOWN OF	10 CENTRAL ROAD	12	54
RYE, TOWN OF	20 CENTRAL ROAD	12	55
RYE, TOWN OF	37 CENTRAL ROAD	12	38
RYE, TOWN OF	105 LOCKE ROAD	8	64
RYE, TOWN OF	309 GROVE ROAD	11	134
RYE, TOWN OF	2689 OCEAN BOULEVARD	2	1

Owner	Location	Map	Lot
RYE, TOWN OF	0 MARSH ROAD	19	132
RYE, TOWN OF	0 PERKINS ROAD	52	12
RYE, TOWN OF	179 PIONEER ROAD	22	74
RYE, TOWN OF	0 WALLIS ROAD	173	27
RYE, TOWN OF	0 PARSONS ROAD	19	99
RYE, TOWN OF	0 WALLIS ROAD	16	205
RYE, TOWN OF	0 LOCKE ROAD	12	69
RYE, TOWN OF	0 HARBOR ROAD	92	19
RYE, TOWN OF	0 OLD BEACH ROAD	84	175
RYE, TOWN OF	0 CENTRAL ROAD	5	1
RYE, TOWN OF	0 CHURCH ROAD	2	63
RYE, TOWN OF	10 OLDE PARISH ROAD	12	44
RYE, TOWN OF - CENTRAL CEMETARY	0 CENTRAL ROAD	12	61
TOWN OF RYE	514 WALLIS ROAD	16	82
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	245 WEST ROAD EASMENT	3	11
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	230 WEST ROAD EASMENT	4	10
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WEST ROAD	4	26
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 WASHINGTON ROAD	12	80
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	643 WASHINGTON ROAD	15	8
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	640 LONG JOHN ROAD	16	144
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	60 OCEAN VIEW AVENUE	19.4	31
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	47 APPLIEDORE AVENUE	19.4	50
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	0 LOCKE ROAD	12	2
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	309 WASHINGTON ROAD	16	129
RYE CONSERVATION COMMISSION	4 CARVER STREET	20.0	94



Appendix IV

Current Zoning Parameters in Rye, New Hampshire

The information is derived from the build out study completed in 2002 for the town of Rye by the Rockingham Planning Commission. The districts discussed are as shown on the zoning map on the next page. Below are brief descriptions of Rye's zoning districts. Further elaboration can be found in Rye's Zoning Ordinance.

The majority of Rye is zoned for residential use and falls into one of two districts. The **Single Residence District (SRD)** is approximately 5268 acres in size, covering roughly 70% of the town. Permitted uses include single-family homes, farms, and limited home occupations. Current zoning also allows the following uses by special exception*: mobile homes, condominium conversions, hospitals, convalescent or nursing homes, and homes for the elderly.

The major difference between the **General Residence District (GRD)** and the SRD is that in the GRD, dwellings consisting of two single-family units are allowed provided that such units are used by no more than two families per dwelling. Approximately 450 acres of land are zoned for this use.

Conservation Districts have been so zoned to “permanently preserve unique natural resources from inappropriate development.” There are currently approximately 650 acres of land zoned for conservation in Rye. Among permitted uses are open space and forestry, trails, picnic areas, minimal walkways and structures to support the same.

The **Business District (BD)** is a zone for the location of small retail and service enterprises. It is approximately 55 acres in size and is interspersed throughout town. It allows all the uses permitted in the SRD plus small retail enterprises, limited professional businesses, and lodging establishments as articulated in the Ordinance. The Zoning Board of Adjustment may allow by special exception* other expanded uses (including the sale of petroleum products) as outlined in the Ordinance.

The **Commercial District (CD)** is a general district allowing a wide range of commercial activity. Approximately 221 acres of land located in the US Route 1 corridor are zoned for commercial use. Generally, our Ordinance allows in the CD any uses permitted in the BD and any residence district except single- or 2-family dwellings; vehicle salesrooms, lumberyards and building supplies; professional offices, financial institutions, and the retailing of goods and services. Other uses may be allowed by special exception* provided that they are not detrimental or injurious to the neighborhood

* The zoning terms “special exception,” “variance,” and others are defined in the Concordance.

The **Public Recreation District** includes all lands owned by the Town of Rye, the Rye School district and the State of New Hampshire reserved for recreational purposes. The district includes approximately 443 acres of land throughout town.

Single Residence District

The majority of Rye is zoned for residential use. The Single Residence District is approximately 5268 acres in size and is roughly 70% of the town. As listed in the Zoning Ordinance, permitted uses in this district include:

- Single-family homes.
- Home occupations of persons residing in buildings in which businesses are located.
- Public schools education use.
- General municipal recreational use.
- Churches.
- Aquaculture (within the Wetlands Conservation District).
- Farm, including the sale of products grown on premises only.
- Golf courses.

The following uses are allowed in the Single Residence District by special exception granted by the BOA:

- Cemetery.
- Greenhouse or horticultural enterprise.
- Hospital, convalescent or nursing home, home for the elderly.
- Religious or educational institution.
- Municipal Use.
- Public Utility Use.
- Condominium Conversion.
- Mobile Homes.
- Quarries pits and turf farms.
- Bed and Breakfast Facilities.
- Business Use of a Residence.

General Residence District

General Residence District is a residential district that allows all of those uses allowed in the Single residence District as well as dwellings consisting of two single family units to be used by not more than two families per dwelling. The following uses are allowed by special exception granted by the BOA:

- Cemetery.
- Greenhouse or horticultural enterprise.
- Hospital, convalescent or nursing home, home for the elderly, religious or educational institution.

- Municipal Use.
- Public Utility Use.
- Condominium Conversion.
- Mobile Homes.
- Quarries pits and turf farms.
- Bed and Breakfast Facilities.

Conservation District

Areas in the Conservation District “permanently preserve unique natural resources from inappropriate development.” The following are permitted uses:

- Open space, forestry, conservation areas.
- Aquaculture that does not involve any construction of buildings or structures.
- Hiking trails, nature trails, picnic areas, bicycling trails, cross country skiing trails, and horseback riding trails, including bridges and wooden walkways appurtenant thereto.
- Nature centers, interpretive centers.
- Blinds for observing or photographing wildlife, birds and waterfowl.
- Uses accessory to any of the above permitted uses provided no buildings are constructed.

Business District

The Business District is a zone for the location of small retail and service enterprises. It is approximately 55 acres in size and is interspersed throughout town. The following uses are allowed in the district according to the zoning ordinance:

- Any uses permitted in the residential district.
- Retail establishment for the sale of groceries, dry goods, and other items commonly related to the retail grocery business.
- Drug stores, barber shop, beauty parlor, tailor shop, TV service, retailing of toys and hobby crafts, bicycle shop and other similar uses.
- Gift, novelty, and sports shops.
- Restaurant, tearoom, ice cream shop, or similar place serving food or beverage.
- Motel, tourist camp, lodging house, and hotel.
- Business, financial, professional or government offices.

The following uses are allowed by special exception granted by the BOA:

- Greenhouse or horticultural enterprise.
- Hospital, convalescent or nursing home, home for the elderly, religious or educational institutions.
- Municipal Use.
- Public Utility Use.
- Membership club.

- Condominium Conversion.
- Mobile Homes.
- Quarries pits and turf farms.
- Any use of the same general character as any of the uses herein allowed.
- The sale of gasoline, diesel fuel, kerosene products and liquefied petroleum gas is prohibited in the business District.

Commercial District

The Commercial District is a general district allowing a wide range of commercial activity. Approximately 221 acres of land are zoned for commercial use in this district that is located along the US Route 1 corridor in town. The following uses are allowed in the district according to the zoning ordinance:

- Any uses permitted in any residence district except single family and two family dwellings.
- Any use permitted in the Business District.
- New automobile salesrooms, new boat salesrooms, new trailer salesrooms, farm machinery salesrooms, lumberyard and building supplies.
- Professional offices, financial institutions, general retailing of goods and services.

The following uses are allowed by special exception granted by the BOA:

Any use of the same general character as any of the uses herein allowed.

The following uses, provided that the use shall not be detrimental or injurious to the neighborhood by reason of the emission of odor, fumes, smoke , vibrations, or noise of any other cause, to wit: wholesale establishments for manufactured solid materials, gasoline stations, public garages, diners.

- Cemeteries.
- Greenhouse or horticultural enterprise.
- Hospital, convalescent or nursing home, home for the elderly, religious or educational institutions.
- Municipal Use.
- Public Utility Use.
- Membership club.
- Condominium Conversion.
- Mobile Homes.
- Quarries pits and turf farms.

Public Recreation

This district includes all lands owned by the Town of Rye, the Rye School district and the State of New Hampshire reserved for recreational purposes. The district includes approximately 443 acres of land throughout town.

	ZONING DISTRICTS	MINIMUM LOT SIZE	FRONTAGE	SETBACKS		
ZONE				SIDE	FRONT	REAR
SR	Single Residence	66,000	200	20	40	30
GR	General Residence	44,000	150	20	30	30
B	Business	44,000	150	20	30	30
C	Commercial	44,000	150	20	30	24
REC	Public Recreation					
CON	Conservation District					